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THE
PRACTICAL WORKS
OF
THE REV. RICHARD BAXTER:

WITH
A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,
AND
A CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF HIS WRITINGS,

BY THE
REV. WILLIAM ORME,
AUTHOR OF "THE LIFE OF JOHN OWEN, D.D.;" "BIBLIOTHECA BIBLICA," ETC.

IN TWENTY-THREE VOLUMES.

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THE
PRACTICAL WORKS
OF THE
REV. RICHARD BAXTER.

VOLUME II.

CONTAINING
THE CHRISTIAN DIRECTORY.

R, EDWARDS, CRANE COURT, FLEET STREET, LONDON.

A
CHRISTIAN DIRECTORY :
OR, A SUM OF
PRACTICAL THEOLOGY,
AND
CASES OF CONSCIENCE.

**DIRECTING CHRISTIANS, HOW TO USE THEIR KNOWLEDGE AND
FAITH; HOW TO IMPROVE ALL HELPS AND MEANS, AND TO
PERFORM ALL DUTIES; HOW TO OVERCOME TEMPTATIONS,
AND TO ESCAPE OR MORTIFY EVERY SIN.**

IN FOUR PARTS.

- I. CHRISTIAN ETHICS, (OR PRIVATE DUTIES.)**
- II. CHRISTIAN ECONOMICS, (OR FAMILY DUTIES.)**
- III. CHRISTIAN ECCLESIASTICS, (OR CHURCH DUTIES.)**
- IV. CHRISTIAN POLITICS, (OR DUTIES TO OUR RULERS AND NEIGHBOURS.)**

PART I.

CHRISTIAN ETHICS, (OR PRIVATE DUTIES.)

ADVERTISEMENT.

READERS,

THE Book is so big that I must make no longer Preface, than to give you this necessary, short account, 1. Of the Quality; 2. and the Reasons of this work.

I. The Matter you will see in the Contents: As Amesius's "Cases of Conscience" are to his "Medulla," the second and practical part of Theology, so is this to a "Methodus Theologiæ" which I have not yet published. And 1. As to the method of this, it is partly natural, but principally moral, 'secundum ordinem intentionis,' where our reasons of each location are fetched from the end. Therefore unless I might be tedious in opening my reasons 'à finè' for the order of every particular, I know not how to give you full satisfaction. But in this practical part I am the less solicitous about the accurateness of method, because it more belongeth to the former part (the theory), where I do it as well as I am able.

2. This book was written in 1664 and 1665 (except the ecclesiastic cases of conscience, and a few sheets since added). And since the writing of it, some invitations drew me to publish my "Reasons of the Christian Religion," my "Life of Faith," and "Directions for Weak Christians;" by which the work of the two first chapters here is more fully done; and therefore I was inclined here to leave them out; but for the use of such families as may have this without the other, I forbore to dismember it.

3. But there is a great disproportion between the several parts of the book. 1. The first part is largest, because I

thought that the heart must be kept with greatest diligence, and that if the tree be good the fruit will be good ; and I remember Paul's counsel, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine ; continue in them : for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee *." Nothing is well done by him that beginneth not at home : as the man is, so is his strength, and work. 2. The two first chapters are too coarse and tedious for those of the higher form, who may pass them over. But the rest must be spoken to ; to whom that is unprofitable which is most suitable and pleasant to more exercised and accurate wits. The Grand Directions are but the explications of the essentials of Christianity, or of the baptismal covenant, even of our relation-duties to God the Father, Son (in several parts of his relation), and of the Holy Ghost. The doctrine of Temptations is handled with brevity, because they are so numerous ; lest a due amplification should have swelled the book too much ; when a small part of their number maketh up so much of Mr. John Downe's great and excellent treatise, called "The Christian Warfare." The great radical sins are handled more largely than seemeth proportionable to the rest, because all die when they are dead. And I am large about Redeeming Time, because therein the sum of a holy, obedient life is included.

3. 4. If any say, "Why call you that a Sum of Practical Theology which is but the directing part, and leaveth out the explication, reasons, various uses, marks, motives, &c.?" I answer, 1. Had I intended sermonwise to say all that might well be said on each subject, it would have made many volumes as big as this. 2. Where I thought them needful, the explication of each duty and sin is added, with marks, contraries, counterfeits, motives, &c. And uses are easily added by an ordinary reader, without my naming them.

5. I do especially desire you to observe, that the resolving of practical cases of conscience, and the reducing of theoretical knowledge into serious Christian practice, and promoting a skilful facility in the faithful exercise of universal obedience, and holiness of heart and life, is the great work of this treatise ; and that where I thought it needful, the cases

are reduced to express Questions and Answers. But had I done so by all, many such volumes would have been too little; and therefore I thought the directing way most brief and fit for Christian practice; for if you mark them, you will find few directions in the book, which may not pass for the answer of an implied question or case of conscience; and when I have given you the answer in a direction, an ingenious reader can tell what question it is that is answered. And so, many hundred cases are here resolved, especially in the two first parts, which are not interrogatively named.

6. And I must do myself the right as to notify to the reader, that this treatise was written when I was (for not-subscribing, declaring, &c.) forbidden by the law to preach, and when I had been long separated far from my library and from all books, saving an inconsiderable parcel which wandered with me, where I went; by which means this book hath two defects: 1. It hath no cases of conscience, but what my bare memory brought to hand: and cases are so innumerable, that it is far harder, methinks, to remember them, than to answer them; whereby it came to pass that some of the ecclesiastical cases, are put out of their proper place, because I could not seasonably remember them. For I had no one casuist but Amesius with me. But (after about twelve years separation), having received my library, I find that the very sight of Sayrus, Fragoso, Roderiquez, Tolet, &c. might have helped my memory to a greater number. But perhaps these will be enough for those that I intend them for. 2. And by the same cause the margin is unfurnished of such citations as are accounted an ornament, and in some cases are very useful. The scraps inserted out of my few trivial books at hand being so mean, as that I am well content (except about Monarchy, Part IV.) that the reader pass them by as not worthy of his notice.

And it is likely that the absence of books, will appear to the reader's loss in the materials of the treatise; but I shall have this advantage by it, that he will not accuse me as a plagiarist. And it may be some little advantage to him, that he hath no transcript of any man's books, which he had be-

fore ; but the product of some experience, with a naked, unbiassed perception of the matter or things themselves.

7. Note also, that the Third and Fourth Parts are very defective of what they should contain, about the power and government of God's officers in church and state ; of which no readers will expect a reason but strangers, whose expectations I may not satisfy. But as I must profess, that I hope nothing here hath proceeded from disloyalty, or disrespect to Authority, Government, Unity, Concord, Peace or Order ; or from any opposition to Faith, Piety, Love, or Justice ; so if unknown to me, there be any thing found here that is contrary or injurious to any one of these, I do hereby renounce it, and desire it may be taken as 'non-scriptum.'

II. The Ends and Uses for which I wrote this book are these: 1. That when I could not preach the Gospel as I would, I might do it as I could. 2. That three sorts might have the benefit, as followeth.

1. That the younger and more unfurnished, and unexperienced sort of ministers, might have a promptuary at hand, for practical resolutions and directions on the subjects that they have need to deal in. And though Sayrus and Fragoso have done well, I would not have us under a necessity, of going to the Romanists for our ordinary supplies. Long have our divines been wishing for some fuller casuistical tractate: Perkins began well ; Bishop Sanderson hath done excellently 'de juramento ;' Amesius hath exceeded all, though briefly: Mr. David Dickson hath put more of our English cases about the state of sanctification, into Latin, than ever was done before him. Bishop Jeremy Taylor hath in two folios but begun the copious performance of the work. And still men are calling for more, which I have attempted: hoping that others will come after, and do better than we all.

If any call it my pride, to think that any ministers or students are so raw as to need any thing that I can add to them, let him but pardon me for saying that such demure pleadings for a feigned humility, shall not draw me to a confederacy with blindness, hypocrisy, and sloth, and I will pardon him for his charge of pride.

It is long ago since many foreign divines subscribed a request, that the English would give them in Latin a Sum of our Practical Theology, which Mr. Dury sent over, and twelve great divines of ours wrote to Bishop Usher (as Dr. Bernard tells you in his Life), to draw them up a form or method. But it was never done among them all. And it is said, that Bishop Downname at last undertaking it, died in the attempt. Had this been done, it is like my labour might have been spared. But being undone, I have thus made this essay. But I have been necessitated to leave out much (about Conversion, Mortification, Self-denial, Self-acquaintance, Faith, Justification, Judgment, Glory, &c.), because I had written of them all before.

2. And I thought it not unuseful to the more judicious masters of families, who may choose and read such parcels to their families, as at any time the case requireth. And indeed I began it rudely, with an intention of that plainness and brevity which families require; but finding that it swelled to a bigger bulk than I intended, I was fain to write my "Life of Faith," as a breviat and substitute, for the families and persons that cannot have and use so large a volume: presupposing, my "Directions for sound Conversion," for "Weak Christians," and for "Peace of Conscience," printed long ago.

3. And to private Christians I thought it not in vain, to have at hand so universal a directory and resolution of doubts; not expecting that they remember all, but may on every occasion, turn to such particulars as they most need.

But I must expect to be assaulted with these objections: and it is not only profane deriders and malignant enemies, that are used by satan to vilify and oppose our service of God.

Object. I. 'You have written too many books already. Who do you think hath so little to do as to read them all? Is it not pride and self-conceitedness to think that your scribblings are worthy to be read? and that the world hath need of so much of your instructions, as if there were no wise men but you? You have given offence already by your writings; you should *write less*, and *preach more*.'

Answ. 1. I have seldom, if ever, in all my ministry, omit-

ted one sermon for all my writings. I was not able to live in London, nor ride abroad ; but through God's mercy I seldom omitted any opportunities at home.

2. And if I preach the same doctrine that I write, why should not men be as angry with me for preaching it, as for writing it? But if it be good and true, why is it not as good to preach by the press, to many thousands, and for many years after I am dead, as to preach to a parlour full for a few hours? Or why is not both as good as one?

3. I will not take the reverend objector to be ignorant, that writing, and publishing the word of God by it, is preaching it, and the most public preaching; and hath the example of the Apostles and Evangelists, as well as speaking. And one is no more appropriate to them than the other: though the extraordinaries of both be proper to them. And do you not perceive what self-condemning contradiction it is, at the same time to cry out against those that dissuade you from preaching, or hinder you, and tell you it is needless, and you are proud to think the world needeth your preaching, and yet yourselves to say the very same against your brethren's preaching by the press? I know an ignorant, illiterate sectary might say, ' Writing is no preaching; and you are called to preach, and not to write.' But I must reverence you more than to suppose you so absurd. Other men forbid you but *less public* preaching, and you reproach me for *more public* preaching: that is the difference. How hard is it to know what spirit we are of? Did you think that you had been patrons of idleness, and silencers of ministers, while you declaim so much against it? Your pretence that you would have me preach more, is feigned. And are you sure that you preach oftener than I do? When I persuaded ministers heretofore to catechise and instruct all their parishes personally, family by family, you said it was more toil than was our duty. And now you are against much writing too; and yet would be thought laborious ministers.

And as to the number and length of my writings, it is my own labour that maketh them so, and my own great trouble, that the world cannot be sufficiently instructed and edified in fewer words. But 1. Would not all your sermons set toge-

ther be as long? And why is not much and long preaching blamable, if long writings be? 2. Are not the works of Augustine, and Chrysostom, much longer? Who yet hath reproached Aquinas or Suarez, Calvin or Zanchy, &c. for the number and greatness of the volumes they have written? Why do you contradict yourselves by affecting great libraries? 3. When did I ever persuade any one of you, to buy or read any book of mine? What harm will they do to those that let them alone? Or what harm can it do you for other men to read them? Let them be to you as if they had never been written; and it will be nothing to you how many they are. And if all others take not you for their tutors, to choose for them what books they must read, that is not my doing, but their own. If they err in taking themselves to be fitter judges than you, what tendeth most to their own edification, why do you not teach them better? 4. Either it is God's truth, or error, which I write. If error, why doth no one of you shew so much charity, as by word or writing to instruct me better, nor evince it to my face, but do all to others by backbiting? If truth, what harm will it do? If men had not leisure to read our writings, the booksellers would silence us, and save you the labour; for none would print them. 5. But who can please all men? Whilst a few of you cry out of too much, what if twenty or a hundred for one be yet for more? How shall I know whether you or they be the wiser and the better men?

Readers, you see on what terms we must do the work of God. Our slothful flesh is backward, and weary of so much labour: malignant enemies of piety are against it all. Some slothful brethren think it necessary to cloke their fleshly ease by vilifying the diligence of others. Many sects whom we oppose, think it the interest of their cause (which they call God's cause), to make all that is said against them seem vain, contemptible, and odious; which because they cannot do by confutation, they will do by backbiting and confident chat. And one or two reverend brethren, have, by the wisdom described exactly, James iii. 15, 16, arrived at the liberty of backbiting and magisterial sentencing the works of others (which they confess they never read), that their reputation of

being most learned, orthodox, worthy divines, may keep the chair at easier rates, than the wasting of their flesh in unwearied labours to know the truth, and communicate it to the world. And some are angry, who are forward to write, that the booksellers and readers silence not others as well as them.

Object. II. 'Your writings differing from the common judgment, have already caused offence to the godly.'

Answ. 1. To the godly that were of a contrary opinion only. Sores that will not be healed, use to be exasperated by the medicine. 2. It was none but healing, pacificatory writings, that have caused that offence. 3. Have not those dissenters' writings more offended the godly that were against them? They have but one trick, to honour their denial, which more dishonoureth it, even by unsanctifying those that are not of their minds. 4. If God bless me with opportunity and help, I will offend such men much more, by endeavouring further than ever I have done, the quenching of that fire which they are still blowing up; and detecting the folly and mischief of those logomachies by which they militate against love and concord, and inflame and tear the church of God. And let them know that I am about it. But some pastors as well as people, have the weakness to think that all our preachings and writings must be brought under their dominion, and to their bar, by the bare saying that 'We offend the godly,' that is, those of their opinion, which they falsely call by the name of scandal. 5. But I think they will find little controversy to offend them in this book.

Object. III. 'You should take more leisure, and take other men's judgment of your writings before you thrust them out so hastily.'

Answ. 1. I have but a little while to live, and therefore must work while it is day. Time will not stay. 2. I do shew them to those that I take to be most judicious, and never refused any man's censure; but it is not many that have leisure to do me so great a kindness. But that I commit them not to the perusal of every objector, is a fault incurable, by one that never had an amanuensis, and hath but one copy, usually. 3. And if I could do it, how should I

be sure that they would not differ as much among themselves, as they do from me? And my writings would be like the picture which the great painter exposed to the censure of every passenger, and made it ridiculous to all, when he altered all that every one advised him to alter. And, to tell you the truth, I was never yet blamed by one side as not sufficiently pleasing them; but I was blamed also by the contrary side, for coming so near them: and I had not wit enough to know which party of the accusers was the wiser? And therefore am resolved to study to please God and conscience, and to take man-pleasing, when inconsistent, for an impossible and unprofitable work; and to cease from man whose breath is in his nostrils, whose thoughts all perish as he passeth off the judicature of his stage, to the judicature of God.

Object. IV. 'Your ecclesiastical cases are dangerously reconciling, tending to abate men's zeal against error.'

Answ. The world hath long enough escaped the danger of peace and reconciliation. It had been well if they had as long escaped the danger of your conceited, orthodox strife, which hath brought in confusion and all evil works. I take it to be a zeal effectively against love, and against unity, and against Christ, which, with the preachers of extremes, goeth under the name of a zeal against error, and for truth.

Object. V. 'Are all these numerous Directions to be found in Scripture? Shew us them in Scripture, or you trouble the church with your own inventions.'

Answ. 1. Are all your sermons in the Scripture? And all the good books of your library in the Scripture? 2. Will you have none but readers in the church, and put down preachers? Sure it is the reader that delivereth all and only the Scripture. 3. Are we not men before we are Christians? And is not the light and law of nature, divine? And was the Scripture written to be instead of reason, or of logic, or other subservient sciences? Or must they not all be sanctified and used for divinity? 4. But I think that as all good commentaries, and sermons, and systems of theology, are in Scripture, so is the Directory here given, and is proved by

the evidence of the very thing discoursed of, or by the plainest texts.

Object. VI. ' You confound your reader by curiosity of distinctions.'

Ans. 1. If they are vain or false, shame them by detecting it, or you shame yourselves by blaming them, when you cannot shew the error. Expose not yourselves to laughter by avoiding just distinction to escape confusion; that is, avoiding knowledge to escape ignorance, or light to escape darkness. 2. It is ambiguity and confusion that breedeth and feedeth almost all our pernicious controversies; and even those that bring in error by vain distinction, must be confuted by better distinguishers, and not by ignorant confounders. I will believe the Holy Ghost, 2 Tim. ii. 14; 15, 16. that logomachy is the plague by which the hearers are subverted, and ungodliness increased; and that orthotomy, or right dividing the Word of Truth is the cure. And Heb. v. 14. Discerning both good and evil, is the work of long and well exercised senses.

Object. VII. ' Is this your reducing our faith to the primitive simplicity, and to the creed? What a toilsome task do you make religion by overdoing? Is any man able to remember all these numberless Directions?'

Ans. 1. I pray mistake not all these for articles of faith. I am more zealous than ever I was for the reduction of the Christian faith to the primitive simplicity; and more confident that the church will never have peace and concord, till it be so done, as to the test of men's faith and communion. But he that will have no books but his creed and Bible, may follow that sectary, who when he had burnt all his other books as human inventions, at last burnt the Bible, when he grew learned enough to understand, that the translation of that was human too.

2. If men think not all the tools in their shops, and all the furniture of their houses, or the number of their sheep, or cattle, or lands, nor the number of truths received by a learning intellect, &c. to be a trouble and toil, why should they think so of the number of helps to facilitate the practice of their du-

ty? If all the books in your libraries make your studies or religion toilsome, why do you keep them? and do not come to the vulgar religion, that would hear no more but 'Think well, speak well, and do well,' or 'Love God and your neighbour, and do as you would be done by.' He that doth this truly, shall be saved. But there goeth more to the building of a house, than to say, Lay the foundation, and raise the superstructure: universals exist not but in individuals; and the whole consisteth of all the parts.

3. It is not expected that any man remember all these Directions. Therefore I wrote them, because men cannot remember them, that they may upon every necessary occasion, go to that which they have present use for, and cannot otherwise remember.

In sum, to my quarrelsome brethren I have two requests, 1. That instead of their unconscionable, and yet unreformed custom of backbiting, they would tell me to my face of my offences by convincing evidence, and not tempt the hearers to think them envious. And 2. That what I do amiss they would do better: and not be such as will neither laboriously serve the church themselves, nor suffer others; and that they will not be guilty of idleness themselves, nor tempt me to be a slothful servant, who have so little time to spend; for I dare not stand before God under that guilt. And that they will not join with the enemies and resisters of the publication of the Word of God.

And to the Readers my request is, 1. That whatever for quantity or quality in this book is an impediment to their regular, universal obedience, and to a truly holy life, they would neglect and cast away. 2. But that which is truly instructing and helpful, they would diligently digest and practise; and I encourage them by my testimony, that by long experience I am assured, that this PRACTICAL RELIGION will afford both to church, state, and conscience, more certain and more solid peace, than contending disputers, with all their pretences of orthodoxness and zeal against errors for the truth, will ever bring, or did ever attain to.

I crave your pardon for this long apology: it is an age

where the objections are not feigned, and where our greatest and most costly services of God, are charged on us as our greatest sins ; and where at once I am accused of conscience for doing no more, and of men for doing so much. Being really

A most unworthy servant of so good a Master,

RICHARD BAXTER.

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A

CHRISTIAN DIRECTORY.

PART I.

CHRISTIAN ETHICS:

OR,

DIRECTIONS FOR THE ORDERING OF THE PRIVATE ACTIONS OF
OUR HEARTS AND LIVES, IN THE WORK OF HOLY SELF-
GOVERNMENT UNTO AND UNDER GOD.

THE INTRODUCTION.

THE eternal God having made man an intellectual and free agent, able to understand and choose the good, and refuse the evil; to know, and love, and serve his Maker, and by adhering to him in this life of trial, to attain to the blessed sight and enjoyment of his glory in the life to come, hath not been wanting to furnish him with such necessaries, without which these ends could not successfully be sought. When we had lost our moral capacity of pleasing him, that we might enjoy him, he restoreth us to it by the wonderful work of our redemption. In Christ he hath reconciled the world unto himself; and hath given them a general act of oblivion, contained in the covenant of grace, which nothing but men's obstinate and final unwillingness can deprive them of. To procure their consent to this gracious covenant, he hath "committed" to his ministers the "word of reconciliation;" commanding us "to beseech men, as in the stead of Christ, and as though God himself did beseech them by us, to be

reconciled unto God^a ;” and to shew them first their sin, and misery, and proclaim and offer the true remedy, and to let them know, that all things are now ready, and by pleading their duty, their necessity, and their commodity, to compel them to come in^b.

But so great is the blindness and obstinacy of men, that the greatest part refuse consent: being deceived by the pleasures, and profits, and honours of this present world; and make their pretended necessities or business the matter of their excuses, and the unreasonable reasons of their refusal, negligence and delays, till death surprise them, and the door is shut; and they knock, and cry for mercy and admittance, when it is too late^c.

Against this wilful negligence and presumption, which is the principal cause of the damnation of the ungodly world, I have written many books already. But because there are many that profess themselves unfeignedly willing, not only to be saved, but also to be Christ’s disciples; to learn of him, to imitate him, and be conformed to him, and to do the will of God, if they could but know it; I have determined, by God’s assistance, to write this book for the use of such, and to give them from God’s Word those plain Directions, which are suited to the several duties of their lives, and may guide them safely in their walk with God, to life eternal. Expect not here copious and earnest exhortations, for that work I have done already; and have now to do with such, as say they are made willing, and desire help against their ignorance, that skill and will may concur to their salvation. I shall labour to speak as plainly as I can, because I specially intend it for the ignorant; and yet to be competently exact in the Directions, lest such readers lose the benefit by mistakes; and I must speak to many cases, because I speak to families, where all are not in the same condition, and the same persons are not still the same. And therefore if I should not be brief in the particulars, I should be too long in the whole; and tediousness might deprive some readers of the benefit.

In families some are (too ordinarily) ungodly: in a carnal, unrenewed state; and some are godly, in a state of grace^d.

^a 2 Cor. v. 18—20. ^b Matt. xxii. 4. Luke xi. 17. 23. ^c Matt. xxv. 10—12.

^d Ita enim censebat, itaque discernit: duas esse vias, duplicesque cursus animorum a corpore excedentium, nam qui se humanis vitis contaminassent, et se totos libidi-

These are considerable as Christians simply, with respect to God, or in their relations to others: these relations are either ecclesiastical, civil, or domestical.

Accordingly, my intended method is, 1. To direct ungodly, carnal minds, how to attain to a state of grace. 2. To direct those that have saving grace, how to use it; both in the contemplative and active parts of their lives; in their duties of religion, both private and public; in their duties to men, both in their ecclesiastical, civil, and family relations. And, by the way, to direct those that have grace, how to

nibus dedidissent, . . . iis devium quoddam iter esse, sectusum a concilio deorum. Qui autem se integros, castosque servavissent, quibusque fuisset minima cum corporibus contagio, seseque ab his semper sevocassent, essentque in corporibus humanis vitam imitati deorum: his ad illos, a quibus essent profecti, reditum facilem patere. Soc. in Cic. Tusc. I. 72*. Improbe nemini bene esse potest. Cic. Parad. 1. vol. 7. p. 849. Quod si inest in hominum genere mens, fides, virtus, concordia: unde hæc in terras, nisi a superis, defluere potuerunt? cumque sint in nobis consilium, ratio, prudentia, necesse est, deos hæc ipsa habere majora, nec habere solum, sed etiam his uti in maximis, et optimis rebus. Cic. Nat. D. ii. 79. Quod si poetas, si metus supplicii, non ipsa torpido, deterret ab injuriosa facinorosaque vita: nemo est injustus; aut incauti potius habendi sunt improbi. Tum autem qui non ipso honesto movemur; ut boni viri simus, sed utilitate aliqua atque fructu, calidi sumus, non boni. Nam quid faciet is homo in tenebris, qui nihil timet nisi testem, et judicem? Cic. Leg. i. 40, 41. Nam ut nihil interest, utrum nemo valeat, an nemo possit valere: sic non intelligo, quid intersit, utrum nemo sit sapiens, an nemo esse possit. Cic. Leg. iii. 79. Cicero was afraid to speak what he knew of the Unity of the Eternal God the Maker of all †: Illum quidem quasi parentem hujus universitatis invenire, difficile: et cum jam inveniri indicare in vulgus, nefas. Cic. Univ. Op. vol. vii. p. 923.

* The edition of Cicero's Works, by which the quotations are verified and corrected, is Collingwood's, Oxford, 1810, in eight volumes 8vo. (T. C.)

† Very different estimates have been formed of the nature and extent of Cicero's knowledge of God and the truths of natural religion. See Leland's Christian Revelation, vol. i. pp. 274, 297, 298, 330, et seq. 4to. Ed. 1784. Middleton's Life of Cicero, vol. iii. pp. 340, 341, 5th Edit. 1755. Enfield's Hist. Philosophy, vol. ii. p. 20, 4to. Edit. Campbell on the Necessity of Divine Revelation; with remarks on that work by Dr. Erskine, in his fourth dissertation, entitled "The Law of Nature sufficiently propagated to Heathens." I beg the reader's attention to the matured sentiments of this learned and excellent man, whom Bp. Warburton, in his correspondence with Bp. Hurd, calls a *deep divine*. "The concluding paragraph of the preface to this volume," observes Sir H. Moncreiff Wellwood, in his life of Dr. Erskine, "in answer to Dr. Campbell, deserves to be inserted here, as it contains Dr. Erskine's later thoughts of the subject of that dissertation." "The general argument," he says, "of the fourth dissertation, appears to me in the same light as it did three and twenty years ago, when I first published it. But since that time I have been fully convinced that many of the most celebrated philosophers entertained sentiments absolutely inconsistent with the belief of the soul's immortality, and of future rewards and punishments; and have seen considerable cause to suspect, that, under the devout expressions of the Stoic philosophers, a system was disguised, nearly allied to that of Spinoza." Ersk. Diss. preface, p. 10.—Life of Dr. Erskine, p. 242. (T. C.)

discern it, and take the comfort of it; and to direct them how to grow in grace, and persevere unto the end.

And if any reader should be discouraged at the number of duties and directions set before him, I entreat him to consider, 1. That it is God, and not I, that imposeth all these duties on you: and who will question his wisdom, goodness, or power to make laws for us and all the world? 2. That every duty and direction is a mercy to you; and therefore should not be matter of grief, but of thanks. They are but like the commands of parents to their children, when they bid them 'eat their meat, and wear their clothes, and go to bed, and eat not poison, and tumble not in the dirt; and cut not your fingers, and take heed of fire and water, &c.' To leave out any such law or duty, were but to deprive you of an excellent mercy; you will not cut off or cast away any member of your body; any vein, or sinew, or artery, upon pretence that the number maketh them troublesome, when the diminishing of that number would kill or maim you. A student is not offended that he hath many books in his library; nor a tradesman that he hath store of tools; nor the rich at the number of his farms or flocks. Believe it, reader, if thou bring not a malignant quarrelsome mind, thou wilt find that God hath not burdened, but blessed thee with his holy precepts, and that he hath not appointed thee one unnecessary or unprofitable duty; but only such as tend to thy content, and joy, and happiness.*

O let it be the daily, earnest prayer of me and thee, that our hearts prove not false and unwilling to follow the Directions which are given us, lest we condemn ourselves in the things which we allow. Your practice now will shew, whether it be through want of will or skill, if henceforth you unfaithfully neglect your duty. If you are willing, obey now what is plainly taught you, and shew by your diligence that you are willing.

* Vult Deus quodammodo pati vim; et hoc summæ est beneficentiæ, ut ad benefaciendum se pulsari sollicitarique velit. Jos. Acosta, l. 4. c. 12. p. 296.

CHAPTER I.

PART I.

Directions to unconverted, graceless Sinners, for the attaining of true saving Grace.

IF ungodly, miserable sinners were as few, as the devil and their self-love would make themselves believe, I might forbear this part of my work as needless. For the whole need not the physician, but the sick. If you go into twenty families, and ask them all, Whether any of them are in an unsanctified state, unrenewed and unpardoned, and under the wrath and curse of God? you will meet with few that will not tell you, they hope it is better with them than so; and though they are sinners, as all are, yet that they are repenting, pardoned sinners. Nay, there is scarce one of many of the most wicked and notoriously ungodly, but hope they are in a penitent, pardoned state. Even the haters of God will say they love him; and the scorers at godliness will say that they are not ungodly; and that it is but hypocrisy and singularity that they deride: and it were well for them, if saying so would go for proof, and he that will be their judge would take their words. But God will not be deceived, though foolish men are wise enough to deceive themselves. Wickedness will be wickedness when it hath clothed itself with the fairest names: God will condemn it when it hath found out the most plausible pretences and excuses. Though the ungodly think to bear it out in pride and scorn, and think to be saved by their hypocritical lip-service, as soon as the most holy worshippers of the Lord, yet “shall they be like chaff which the wind driveth away: they shall not be able to stand in judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous^a.” And if God know better than foolish men, then certainly the flock is little to whom the “Father will give the kingdom^b.” And “wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat^c: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there

^a Psal. i. 4, 5, 6.^b Luke xii. 32.^c Matt. vii. 13, 14.

be that find it." When Christ was asked, "Lord, are there few that be saved?" he answered, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." But, alas! we need no other information than common experience, to tell us whether the greatest part of men be holy and heavenly, and self-denying; that seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and love God above all, and will forsake all they have for the sake of Christ: and undoubtedly none but such are saved; as you may see Heb. xii. 14. Matt. vi. 20, 21. 38.

Seeing then the godly are so few, and the ungodly so many; and that God will take nothing for holiness that is not such indeed; and seeing it is so terrible a thing to any man that hath his wits about him, to live one day in an unconverted state, because he that dieth so, is lost for ever; methinks it should be our wisdom to be suspicious of ourselves, and careful lest we be deceived in so great a business, and diligent in searching and examining our hearts, whether they are truly sanctified or not; because it can be no harm to make sure work for our salvation; whereas presumption, carelessness, and negligence, may betray us to remediless misery and despair.

I do not here suppose the reader to have any such acquaintance with his heart, or care of his salvation, or obedient willingness to be taught and ruled by Jesus Christ, as is proper to those that are truly sanctified; for it is ungodly persons to whom I am now speaking. And, yet, if I should not suppose them to have some capacity and disposition to make use of the Directions which I give them, I might as well pass them by, and spare my labour. I tell thee therefore, reader, what it is that I presuppose in thee, and expect from thee, and I think thou wilt not judge me unreasonable in my suppositions and expectations.

1. I suppose thee to be a man, and therefore that thou hast reason and natural free-will (that is, the natural faculty of choosing and refusing), which should keep thy sensitive appetite in obedience; and that thou art capable of loving and serving thy Creator, and enjoying him in everlasting life.

2. I suppose that thou knowest thyself to be a man; and therefore that thy sensitive part, or flesh, should no more rule thee, or be ungoverned by thee, than the horse should

rule the rider, or be unrulèd by him: and that thou understandest that thou art made on purpose to love and serve thy Maker, and to be happy in his love and glory for ever. If thou know not this much, thou knowest not that thou art a man, or else knowest not what a man is.

3. I suppose thee to have a natural self-love, and a desire of thy own preservation and happiness; and that thou hast no desire to be miserable, or to be hated of God, or to be cast out of his favour and presence into hell, and there to be tormented with devils everlastingly: yea, I will suppose that thou art not indifferent whether thou dwell in heaven or hell, in joy or torment; but would fain be saved and be happy; whether thou be godly or ungodly, wise or foolish, I will be bold to take all this for granted: and I hope in all this I do not wrong thee.

4. I suppose thee to be one that knowest that thou didst not make thyself; nor give thyself that power or wisdom which thou hast; and that he that made thee and all the world, must needs be before all the world; and that he is eternal, having no beginning (for if ever there had been a time when there was nothing, there never would have been any thing; because nothing can make nothing); and I suppose thou dost confess that all the power, and wisdom, and goodness of the whole creation set together, is less than the power, and wisdom, and goodness of the Creator; because nothing can give more than it hath to give. I suppose, therefore, that thou dost confess that there is a God; for to be the eternal, infinite Being, and the most powerful, wise, and good, and the first cause of all created being, and power, and wisdom, and goodness, this (with the subsequent relations to the creature) is to be GOD. If thou wilt deny that there is a God, thou must deny that thou art a man, and that there is any man, or any being^e.

^e See the proof of the Godhead, and that God is the Governor of the world, and that there is another life for man, in the beginning of my 'Holy Commonwealth,' chap. 1, 2, 3. *Commoda quibus utimur, lucemque qua fruimur, spiritumque quem ducimus, ab eo nobis dari atque impertiri videmus. Cic. Pro. S. Ros. 131. vol. ii. p. 65. Read Galen's Hymns to the Creator, l. i. de usu partium, præcipue, l. iii. cap. 10. Nulla gens est tam immansueta, neque tam fera, quæ non, etiam si ignoret, qualem habere Deum debeat, tamen habendum sciat. Cic. Leg. i. 24. Omnibus enim innatum est, et in animis quasi insculptum, esse deos. Cic. Nat. D. ii. 12. Deum agnoscis ex operibus ejus. Cic. Tusc. i. 70. Nullum est animal præter hominem, quod huius*

5. I suppose thou knowest that God, who gave a being unto all things, is by this title of creation, the absolute Owner or Lord of all: and that he that made the reasonable creatures, with natures to be governed, in order to a further end, is by that title, their supreme Governor; and therefore hath his laws commanding duty, and promising reward, and threatening punishment; and therefore will judge men according to these laws, and will be just in judgment, and in his rewards and punishments. And that he that freely gave the creature its being, and all the good it hath, and must give it all that ever it shall have, is the Father or most bountiful Benefactor to his creatures. Surely I screw thee not too high in supposing thee to know all this; for all this is no more than that there is a God. For he is not God, if he be not the creator, and therefore our owner, our ruler, and benefactor, our absolute Lord, our most righteous governor, and our most loving father, or benefactor.

6. I suppose therefore that thou art convinced, that God must be absolutely submitted to, and obeyed before all others in the world, and loved above all friends, or pleasures, or creatures whatsoever. For to say, 'He is my Owner,' is to say, 'I must yield myself to him as his own:' to say, 'I take him for my supreme Governor,' is to say, that 'I will absolutely be ruled by him:' and to say, 'I take him as my dearest Father or chief Benefactor,' is to say, that 'I am obliged to give him my dearest love, and highest thanks:' otherwise you do but jest, or say you know not what, or contradict yourselves, while you say, 'He is your God.'

7. I suppose that thou art easily convinced, that in all the world there is no creature that can shew so full a title to thee as God; or that hath so great authority to govern thee, or that can be so good to thee, or do so much for thee, as God can do, or hath done, and will do, if thou do thy part; and therefore that there is nothing to be preferred before him, or compared with him in our obedience or love:

beat notitiam aliquam dei. Cic. Leg. i. 25. Nulla gens tam fera, nemo omnium tam sit immanis, cujus mentem non imbuerit deorum opinio. Cic. Tusc. i. 20. "I had rather believe all the fables in the Legend, and the Talmud, and the Alcoran, than that this universal frame is without a mind." Lord Bacon, Essay 16. "A little philosophy inclineth a man's mind to atheism: but depth in philosophy bringeth men's minds about to religion." Lord Bacon; Essay 16.

nor is there any that can save us from his justice, if we stand out against him.

8. I suppose that as thou knowest God is just, in his laws and judgments, so that he is so faithful that he will not, and so all-sufficient, that he need not deceive mankind; and govern them by mere deceit: this better beseems the devil, than God: and therefore that as he governeth man on earth by the hopes and fears of another life, he doth not delude them into such hopes or fears: and as he doth not procure obedience by any rewards or punishments in this life, as the principal means (the wicked prospering, and the best being persecuted and afflicted here), therefore his rewards or punishments, must needs be principally hereafter in the life to come. For if he have no rewards and punishments, he hath no judgment; and if he have no judgment, he hath no laws (or else no justice); and if he have no laws (or no justice), he is no governor of man (or not a righteous governor); and if he be not our governor (and just), he is not our God; and if he were not our God, we had never been his creatures, nor had a being, or been men^f.

9. I suppose thou knowest that if God had not discovered what he would do with us, in the life to come, yet man is highest bound to obey and love his Maker, because he is our absolute Lord, our highest ruler, and our chief benefactor; and all that we are or have is from him. And that if man be bound to spend his life in the service of his God, it is certain that he shall be no loser by him, no not by the costliest obedience that we can perform; for God cannot appoint us any thing that is vain; nor can he be worse to us than an honest man, that will see that we lose not by his service. Therefore that God for whom we must spend and forsake this life, and all those pleasures which sensualists enjoy, hath certainly some greater thing to give us, in another life.

^f *Mundum autem censent regi numine deorum, eumque esse quasi communem urbem, et civitatem hominum, et deorum. Cic. Fin. iii. 64. Impiis apud inferos poenas esse præparatas. Cic. Inv. i. 46. Vero et Jovem, et dominatorem rerum, et omnia nutu regentem, et, ut idem Ennius,*

—patrem divinumque, hominumque,

et præsentem ac præpotentem deum. Quod qui dubitet, hæc sane intelligo, cur non idem, sol sit, an ullus sit, dubitare possit. Cic. Nat. D. ii. 4.

10. I may take it for granted at the worst, that neither thyself, nor any infidel in the world, can say that you are sure that there is not another life for man, in which his present obedience shall be rewarded, and disobedience punished. The worst that ever infidel could say was, that 'He thinketh that there is no other life.' None of you dare deny the possibility of it, nor can with any reason deny the probability. Well, then, let this be remembered while we proceed a little further with you.

11. I suppose or expect that you have so much use of sense and reason, as to know the brevity and vanity of all the glory and pleasures of the flesh; and that they are all so quickly gone, that were they greater than they are, they can be of no considerable value. Alas, what is time! How quickly gone, and then it is nothing! and all things then are nothing which are passed with it! So that the joys or sorrows of so short a life, are no great matter of gain or loss.

I may therefore suppose that thou canst easily conclude, that the bare probability or possibility of an endless happiness, should be infinitely preferred before such transitory vanity, even the greatest matters that can be expected here; and that the probability or possibility of endless misery in hell, should engage us with far greater care and diligence to avoid it, than is due for the avoiding any thing that you can think to escape by sinning; or any of the sufferings of this momentary life. If you see not this, you have lost your reason; that the mere probability or possibility of a heaven and hell, should much more command our care and diligence, than the fading vanities of this dreaming, transitory life.

12. Well, then; we have got thus far in the clearest light. You see that a religious, holy life, is every man's duty, not only as they owe it to God as their creator, their owner, governor, and benefactor; but also, because as lovers of ourselves, our reason commandeth us to have ten thousandfold more regard of a probable or possible joy and torment which are endless, than of any that is small and of short continuance. And if this be so, that a holy life is every man's duty, with respect to the life that is to come, then it is most evident, that there is such a life to come in?

■ deed, and that it is more than probable or possible, even cer-
■ tain. For if it be but man's duty to manage this life, by
■ the hopes and fears of another life, then it must follow, that
■ either there is such a life to come, or else that God hath
■ made it man's duty to hope, and fear, and care, and labour,
■ and live in vain; and that he himself doth tantalize and
■ cheat his creatures, and rule the world by motives of deceit,
■ and make religion and obedience to our Maker to be a life
■ of folly, delusion, and our loss. And he that believeth this
■ of God, doth scarcely believe him to be God. Though I
■ have mentioned this argument in another treatise, I think it
■ not unmeet here to repeat it for thy benefit.

13. And seeing I suppose thee to be convinced of
the life to come, and that man's happiness and misery is
there, I must needs suppose that thou dost confess, that all
things in this life, whether prosperity or adversity, honour
or dishonour, are to be esteemed and used as they refer to
the life to come. For nothing is more plain, than that the
means are to have all their esteem and use in order to their
end. That only is good in this life, which tendeth to the
happiness of our endless life; and that is evil indeed in this
life, that tendeth to our endless hurt, and to deprive us of
the everlasting good. And therefore no price or motive
should hire us to sin against God, and to forfeit or hinder
our endless happiness.

14. I may suppose, if thou have reason, that thou wilt
confess that God cannot be too much loved, nor obeyed
too exactly, nor served too diligently (especially by such
backward sinners, that have scarce any mind to love or wor-
ship him at all); and that no man can make too sure of
heaven, or pay too dear for it, or do too much for his sal-
vation, if it be but that which God hath appointed him to do.
And that you have nothing else that is so much worth your
time, and love, and care, and labour. And therefore though
you have need to be stopped in your love, and care, and la-
bour for the world, because for it you may easily pay too
dear, and do too much; yet there is no need of stopping
men in their love, and care, and labour for God and their
salvation; which is worth more than ever we can do, and
where the best are apt to do too little.

... Non enim temere, nec fortuito satii, et creati sumus, sed profecto fuit quidam

15. I also suppose thee to be one that knowest, that this present life is given us on trial, to prepare for the life that shall come after; and that as men live here, they shall speed for ever; and that time cannot be recalled, when it is gone; and therefore that we should make the best of it while we have it.

16. I suppose thee also to be easily convinced, that seeing man hath his reason and life for matters of everlasting consequence, his thoughts of them should be frequent and very serious, and his reason should be used about these things, by retired, sober deliberation.

17. And I suppose thee to be a man, and therefore so far acquainted with thyself; as that thou mayst know, if thou wilt, whether thy heart and life do answer thy convictions, and whether they are more for heaven or earth; and therefore that thou art capable of self-judging in this case.

Perhaps you will say, that while I am directing you to be holy, I suppose you to be holy first; for all this seemeth to go far towards it. But I must profess that I see not any thing in all these suppositions, but what I may suppose to be in a heathen; and that I think all this is but supposing thee to have the use of thy reason, in the points in hand. Speak freely: Is there any one of all these points that thou canst or darest deny? I think there is not. And therefore if heathens and wicked men deny them in their practice, that doth but shew that sin doth brutify them, and that, as men asleep, or in a crowd of business, they have not the use of the reason which they possess, in the matters which their minds are turned from.

18. Yea, one thing more I think I may suppose in all or most that will read this book; that you take on you also to believe in Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost the Sanctifier, and that the Scriptures are the Word of God. And if you do so indeed, I may then hope that my work is in a manner done, before I begin it: but if you do it but opinionatively and uneffectually, yet God and man may plead with you the truths which you profess.

Having told you what I presuppose in you, I proceed now to the Directions. But I again entreat and charge thee,

vis, quæ generi consuleret humano: nec id gigneret; aut aleret, quod, cum exantlavisset omnes labores, tum incideret in mortis malum sempiternum. Cic. Tusc. i. 118.

reader, as thou lovest thy soul, and wouldst not be condemned for hypocrisy and sloth, that thou dost not refuse to put in practice what is taught thee, and shew thereby, that whatever thou pretendest, thou art not willing to do thy part for thy own salvation, no not in the most reasonable, necessary things^h.

Direction 1. ‘If thou be truly willing to be sanctified and a child of God, remain not in a state of ignorance; but do thy best to come into the light, and understand the Word of God, in the matters of salvation.’

If knowledge be unnecessary, why have we understandingⁱ? and wherein doth a man excel a beast? If any knowledge at all be necessary, certainly it must be the knowledge of the greatest and most necessary things: and nothing is so great and necessary as to obey thy Maker, and to save thy soul. Knowledge is to be valued according to its usefulness. If it be a matter of as great concernment to know how to do your worldly business, and to trade and gather worldly wealth, and to understand the laws, and to maintain your honour, as it is to know how to be reconciled unto God, to be pardoned and justified, to please your Creator, to prepare in time for death and judgment, and an endless life, then let worldly wisdom have the pre-eminence. But if all earthly things be dreams and shadows, and valuable only as they serve us in the way to heaven, then surely the heavenly wisdom is the best. Alas, how far is that man from being wise, that is acquainted with all the punctilios of the law, that is

^h Abeunt enim illuc omnia unde orta sunt. Cic. Sen. 80. vol. 7, p. 816. Sed credo, deos immortales sparsisse animos in corpora humana, ut essent, qui terras tuerentur, quique cœlestium ordinem contemplantes, imitarentur eum vitæ modo atque constantiâ. Cic. Sen. 77. vol. 7. p. 815. Sunt enim e terra homines non ut incolæ atque habitatores, sed quasi spectatores superarum rerum atque cœlestium, quarum spectaculum ad nullum aliud genus animantium pertinet. Cic. Nat. Deo. ii. 140. Nam cum cæteras animantes abjecisset ad pastum, solum hominem erexit, ad cœlique, quasi cognationis domiciliique pristini, conspectum excitavit: tum speciem ita formavit oris, utin ea penitus reconditos mores effingeret. Cic. Leg. 1. 26. Nisi Deus... istis te corporis custodiis liberaverit, huc tibi aditus patere non potest. Cic. Som. Scip. 3. vol. 7. p. 915. Virorum sapientissimorum ac fortissimorum civium mentes, quæ mihi videntur ex hominum vita ad deorum religionem et sanctimoniam demigrasse. Cic. Pro. Rab. 30. Animum tamen esse ingeneratum a Deo: ex quo vere vel agnatio nobis cum cœlestibus, vel genus, vel stirps appellari potest. Cic. Leg. 1. 24.

ⁱ Qui seipsum cognoverit, cognoscet in se omnia: Deum, ad cujus imaginem factus est: mundum, cujus simulachrum gerit; creaturas omnes cum quibus symbolum habet. Paul. Scaliger. Thes. p. 722.

excellent in the knowledge of all the languages, sciences, and arts, and yet knoweth not how to live to God, to mortify the flesh, to conquer sin, to deny himself, nor to answer in judgment for his fleshly life, nor to escape damnation! As far is such a learned man from being wise, as he is from being happy.

Two sorts among us do quietly live in damning ignorance. First, abundance of poor people, who think they may continue in it, because they were bred in it; and that because they are not book-learned, therefore they need not learn how to be saved; and because their parents neglected to teach them when they were young, therefore they may neglect themselves ever after, and need not learn the things they were made for. Alas, sirs, what have you your lives, your time, and reason for? Do you think it is only to know how to do your worldly business? Or is it to prepare for a better world? It is better that you knew not how to eat, or drink, or speak, or go, or dress yourselves, than that you know not the will of God, and the way to your salvation. Hear what the Holy Ghost saith, "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them^k." Darkness is unsafe and full of fears; the light is safe and comfortable. A man in ignorance is never like to hit his way: nor can he know whether he be in or out; nor what enemy or danger he is near. It is the devil that is the prince of darkness, and his kingdom is a kingdom of darkness, and his works are works of darkness^l. Grace turneth men from darkness to light^m, and causeth them to cast off the works of darknessⁿ. Because we are the children of light and of the day, and not of darkness or of night^o. They that were sometime darkness, are light in the Lord, when they are converted, and must walk as the children of the light^p. In the dark the devil and wicked men may cheat you, and do almost what they list with you. You will not buy your wares in the dark, nor travel, or do your work in the dark: and will you judge of the state of your souls in the dark? and do the work of your salvation in the dark? I tell you the devil could

^k 2 Cor. iv. 3; 4.

^l Ephes. vi. 12. Col. i. 13. ¹ John. xi. 10. Luke xi. 34, 35.

^m Acts xxvi. 18.

ⁿ Rom. xiii. 12.

^o 1 Thes. v. 5.

^p Ephes. v. 8.

never entice so many souls to hell, if he did not first put out the light, or put out their eyes. They would never so follow him by crowds, to everlasting torments, by daylight, and with open eyes. If men did but know well what they do when they are sinning, and whither they go in a carnal life, they would quickly stop, and go no further. All the devils in hell could never draw so many thither, if men's ignorance were not the advantage of temptations.

Another sort among us that are ignorant of the things of God, are sensual gentlemen, and scholars, that have so much breeding as to understand the words, and speak somewhat better than the ruder sort, but indeed never knew the nature, truth, and goodness of the things they speak of: they are many of them as ignorant of the nature of faith, and sanctification, and the working of the Holy Ghost in planting the image of God upon the soul, and of the saint's communion with God, and the nature of a holy life, as if they had never heard or believed, that there is such a thing as any of these in being. Nicodemus is a lively instance in this case: a ruler in Israel, and a Pharisee, and yet he knew not what it was to be born again. And the pride of these gallants maketh their ignorance much harder to be cured, than other men's; because it hindereth them from knowing and confessing it^a. If any one would convince them of it, they say with

^a Cum quem possidet peccasse pene innocens est: maxima purgationum pars est voluntaria penitentia delictorum. Scal. Thes. p. 742. Facilius iis ignoscitur qui non perseverare sed ab errato se revocare moluntur; est enim humanum peccare, sed belluinum in errore perseverare. Cic. in Vat. Nullus enim suavior animo cibus est, quam cognitio veritatis. Lactant. Instit. lib. 1. c. 1. Bunemann, p. 11. It is a marvellous and doleful case to think how ignorant some people live, even to old age, under constant and excellent teaching. Some learn neither words nor sense, but hear as if they heard not: some learn words, and know the sense no more than if they had learned but a tongue unknown; and will repeat their creed and catechism, when they know not what it is that they say. A worthy minister of Helvetia told me, that their people are very constant at their sermons, and yet most of them grossly ignorant of the things which they most frequently hear. It is almost incredible what ignorance some ministers report that they have found in some of the eldest of their auditors. Nay, when I have examined some that have professed strictness in religion, above the common sort of people, I have found some ignorant of some of the fundamentals of the Christian faith. And I remember what an ancient bishop about twelve hundred years ago saith, Maximus Taurinensis in his homilies, that when he had long preached to his people, even on an evening after one of his sermons, he heard a cry or noise among the people, and hearkening what it was, they were by their outcry helping to deliver the moon, that was in labour and wanted help. This is cited also by Papius Massonus, in vita Hilarii Papæ. p. 67.

scorn, as the Pharisees to Christ, “Are we blind also?” Yea, they are ready to insult over the children of the light, that are wise to salvation, because they differ from the loose or hypocritical opinions of these gentlemen, in some matters of God’s worship; of which their worships are as competent judges, as the Pharisees, of the doctrine of Christ, or as Nicodemus of regeneration, or as Simon Magus, or Julian, or Porphyry, of the gifts of the Holy Ghost. These honourable, miserable men, will bear no contradiction or reproof: who dare be so unmannerly, disobedient, or bold, as to tell them that they are out of the way to heaven, and strangers to it (that I say not, enemies); and to presume to stop them in the way to hell, or to hinder them from damning themselves, and as many others as they can? They think this talk of Christ, and grace, and life eternal, if it be but serious (and not like their own, in form, or levity, or scorn), is but the troublesome preciseness of hypocritical, humorous, crack-brained fellows: and say of the godly, as the Pharisees, “Are ye also deceived? Have any of the rulers, or of the Pharisees believed on him? But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed.”

Well, gentlemen or poor men, whoever you be that savour not the things of the Spirit^t, but live in ignorance of the mysteries of salvation, be it known to you, that heavenly truth and holiness are works of light, and never prosper in the dark; and that your best understanding should be used for God and your salvation, if for any thing at all. It is the devil and his deceits that fear the light. Do but understand well what you do, and then be wicked if you can; and then set light by Christ and holiness if you dare! O come but out of darkness into the light, and you will see that which will make you tremble to live ungodly and unconverted another day: and you will see that which will make you with penitent remorse lament your so long neglect of heaven, and wonder that you could live so far, and so long besides your wits, as to choose a course of vanity and bestiality in the chains of satan, before the joyful liberty of the saints: and, though we must not be so uncivil as to tell you where you are, and what you are doing, you will then more uncivilly call yourselves, “exceedingly mad, and foolish, disobedient,

^r John ix. 40.^s John vii. 47—49.^t Rom. viii. 5—7. 13.

deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures^u," as one did that thought himself before as wise and good as any of you. Live not in a sleepy state of ignorance, if ever you would have saving grace.

Direct. II. 'Especially labour first to understand the true nature of a state of sin, and a state of grace.'

It is like you will say, that all are sinners; and that Christ died for sinners; and that you were regenerate in your baptism; and that for the sins that since then you have committed, you have repented of them, and therefore you hope they are forgiven.

But, stay a little, man, and understand the matter well as you go; for it is your salvation that lieth at the stake. It is very true that all are sinners: but it is as true, that some are in a state of sin, and some in a state of grace: some are converted sinners, and some unconverted sinners: some live in sins inconsistent with holiness (which therefore may be called mortal), others have none but infirmities which consist with spiritual life (which in this sense may be called venial): some hate their sin, and long to be perfectly delivered from it: and others so love it, as they are loath to leave it. And is there no difference, think you, between these?

It is as true also, that Christ died for sinners: (or else where were our hope?) But it is true also, that he died to "save his people from their sins^x," and "to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God^y," and "to redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people zealous of good works^z," and that "except a man be born again, and converted, and become as a little child (in humility and beginning the world anew), he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven^a," and that even he that died for sinners, will at last condemn the workers of iniquity, and say, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire^b," "I never knew you^c."

It is very true, that you were sacramentally regenerate in baptism, and that he that believeth and is baptised, shall be saved, and all that are the children of promise, and have that promise sealed to them by baptism, are regenerate. The ancients taught that baptism puts men into a state of grace;

^u Acts xxvi. 11. Tit. iii. 3. ^x Matt. i. 21. ^y Acts xxvi. 18. ^z Tit. ii. 14.

^a John iii. 3. 5. Matt. xviii. 3. ^b Matt. xxv. 41. ^c Matt. vii. 23.

that is, that all that sincerely renounce the world, the devil, and the flesh, and are sincerely given up to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, according to the covenant of grace, and profess and seal this by their baptism; shall be pardoned, and made the heirs of life. But as it is true, that baptism thus saveth, so is it as true, that it is not the “outward washing only the filth of the flesh” that will suffice, but the “answer of a good conscience towards God^b.” And that “no man can enter into the kingdom of God, that is not born of the Spirit, as well as of water^c.” And that Simon Magus and many another have had the water of baptism, that never had the Spirit, but still remain in the “gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity, and had no part nor lot in that business, their hearts being not right in the sight of God^d.” And nothing is more sure, than that “if any man have not the Spirit of Christ (notwithstanding his baptism) he is none of his^e!” And that if you have his Spirit, you “walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit:” and are “not carnally but spiritually minded,” and are “alive to God,” and as “dead to the world^f.” Whether all that were baptised are such as these, when they come to age, judge you.

It is true also, that if you truly repent, you are forgiven: but it is as true, that true repentance is the very conversion of the soul from sin to God, and leaveth not any man in the power of sin. It is not for a man when he hath had all the pleasure that sin will yield him, to wish then that he had not committed it, (which he may do then at an easy rate) and yet to keep the rest that are still pleasant and profitable to his flesh. Like a man that casts away the bottle which he hath drunk empty, but keeps that which is full; or as men sell off their barren kine, and buy milch ones in their stead: this kind of repentance is a mockery, and not a cure for the soul. If thou have true repentance, it hath so far turned thy heart from sin, that thou wouldst not commit it, if it were to do again, though thou hadst all the same temptations; and it hath so far turned thy heart to God and holiness, that thou wouldst live a holy life, if it were all to do again, though thou hadst the same temptations as afore against it. This is the nature of true repentance: such a repentance indeed

^b 1 Pet. ii. 21. ^c John iii. 5. ^d Acts viii. 13. 21. 23. ^e Rom. viii. 9.
 Rom. viii. 1. 5—8. 10. 13. 14.

is never too late to save : but I am sure it never comes too soon.

Mark, now, I beseech you, what a state of sin, and what a state of holiness is.

He that is in a state of sin, hath habitually and predominantly a greater love to some pleasures, or profits, or honours of this world, than he hath to God and to the glory which he hath promised ; he preferreth, and seeketh, and holdeth (if he can) his fleshly prosperity in this world, before the favour of God and the happiness of the world to come. His heart is turned from God unto the creature, and is principally set on things on earth. Thus his sin is the blindness, and madness, and perfidiousness, and idolatry of his soul, and his forsaking of God, and his salvation, for a thing of naught. It is that to his soul, which poison, and death, and sickness, and lameness, and blindness are to his body : it is such dealing with God, as that man is guilty of to his dearest friend or father, who should hate him and his company, and love the company of a dog or toad much better than his ; and obey his enemy against him : and it is like a madman's dealing with his physician, who seeks to kill him as his enemy, because he crosseth his appetite or will, to cure him. Think of this well, and then tell me, whether this be a state to be continued in. This state of sin, is something worse than a mere inconsiderate act of sin, in one that otherwise liveth an obedient, holy life.

On the other side, a state of holiness, is nothing else but the habitual and predominant devotion and dedication of soul, and body, and life, and all that we have to God : an esteeming, and loving, and serving, and seeking him, before all the pleasures and prosperity of the flesh : making his favour, and everlasting happiness in heaven our end, and Jesus Christ our way, and referring all things in the world unto that end, and making this the scope, design, and business of our lives. It is a turning from a deceitful world to God ; and preferring the Creator before the creature, and heaven before earth, and eternity before an inch of time, and our souls before our corruptible bodies, and the authority and laws of God, the universal Governor of the world, before the word or will of any man, how great soever ; and a subjecting our sensitive faculties to our reason, and advancing this rea-

Direct. iv. 'That thy understanding may be enlightened, and thy heart renewed, be much and serious in reading the Word of God, and those books that are fitted to men in an unconverted state, and especially in hearing the plain and searching preaching of the word.'

There is a heavenly light, and power, and majesty in the Word of God, which in the serious reading or hearing of it, may pierce the heart; and prick it, and open it, that corruption may go out, and grace come in. "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple: the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart^a." Moreover, "by them it is that we are warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward^b." The eunuch was reading the Scripture, when Philip was sent to expound it to him for his conversion^c. The preaching of Peter did prick many thousands to the heart to their conversion^d. The heart of Lydia was opened to attend to the preaching of Paul^e. "The word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit^f." These "weapons are mighty through God, to the pulling down of strong holds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ^g." Hast thou often read and heard already, and yet findest no change upon thy heart? Yet read and hear again and again: ministers must not give over preaching, when they have laboured without success: why then should you give over hearing or reading? As the husbandman laboureth, and looketh to God for rain, and for the blessing, so must we, and so must you. Look up to God: remember it is his word, in which he calleth you to repentance, and offereth you mercy, and treateth with you concerning your everlasting happiness: lament your former negligence and disobedience, and beg his blessing on his word, and you shall find it will not be in vain.

And the serious reading of books which expound and apply the Scriptures, suitable to your case, may, by the blessing of God, be effectual to your conversion. I have written

^a Psal. xix. 7, 8.

^b Psal. xix. 11.

^c Acts viii.

^d Acts ii. 37.

^e Acts xvi. 14.

^f Heb. iv. 12.

^g 2 Cor. x. 4, 5.

so many to this use myself, that I shall be the shorter on this subject now, and desire you to read them, or some of them, if you have not fitter at hand; viz. A Call to the Unconverted;—A Treatise of Conversion;—Now or Never;—Directions for a sound Conversion;—A Saint or a Brute;—A Treatise of Judgment;—A Sermon against making light of Christ;—A Sermon of Christ's Dominion;—Another of his Sovereignty, &c.

Direct. y. 'If thou wouldst not be destitute of saving grace, let thy reason be exercised about the matters of thy salvation, in some proportion of frequent, sober, serious thoughts, as thou art convinced the weight of the matter doth require.'

To have reason is common to all men, even the sleepy and distracted: to use reason is common to all that have their senses awake, and fit to serve their minds: to use reason in the greatest matters, is proper to wise men, that know for what end God made them reasonable^u. Inconsiderate men are all ungodly men; for reason not used is as bad as no reason, and will prove much worse in the day of reckoning. The truth is, though sinners are exceeding blind and erroneous about the things of God, yet all God's precepts are so reasonable, and tend so clearly to our joy and happiness, that if the devil did not win most souls by silencing reason, and laying it asleep, or drowning its voice, with the

^u The word itself exciteth reason, and preachers are by reason to shame all sin as a thing unreasonable. And the want of such excitation, by powerful preaching, and plain instructing, and the persons considering, is a great cause of the world's undoing. For those preachers that lay all the blame on the people's stupidity or malignity, I desire them to read a satisfactory answer in Acosta the Jesuit*, lib. iv. c. 2, 3 & 4. Few souls perish, comparatively, where all the means are used which should be used by their superiors for their salvation: if every parish had holy, skilful, laborious pastors, that would publicly and privately do their part, great things might be expected in the world. But, saith Acosta, *Itaque præcipua causa ad ministros parum idoneos redit. Quæ namque est prædicatio nostra? quæ fiducia? signa certe non edimus: vitæ sanctitate non eminemus; beneficentia non invitamus; verbi ac spiritus efficacia non persuademus; lachrymis ac precibus à Deo non impetramus; immo ne magnopere quidem curamus. Quæ ergo nostra querela est? quæ tanta Indorum accusatio?* lib. iv. p. 365. An ingenuous confession of the Roman priesthood. And such priests can expect no better success. But having seen another sort of ministers, through God's mercy, I have seen an answerable fruit of their endeavours.

* Joseph Acosta was a celebrated Spanish author, born at Medina del Campo, about the year 1540. He was a missionary and provincial of the Jesuits in Peru, and died in Salamanca, 1600. Among other works, he wrote a treatise "De procuranda Indorum Salute." 8vo. Salam. 1588. Also, "De Christo Revelato," 4to. Rom. 1590. See Rees's Cyclo. art. Acosta.—(T. C.)

noise and crowd of worldly business, hell would not have so many sad inhabitants. I scarce believe that God will condemn any sinner that ever lived in the world, that had the use of reason; no, not the heathens that had but one talent, but he will be able to say to them as Luke xix. 22. "Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant: Thou knewest," &c. To serve God and labour diligently for salvation, and prefer it before all worldly things, is so reasonable a thing, that every one that repenteth of the contrary course, doth call it from his heart an impious madness. Reason must needs be for God that made it. Reason must needs be for that which is its proper end and use. Sin, as it is in the understanding, is nothing but unreasonableness; a blindness and error; a loss and corruption of reason in the matters of God and our salvation. And grace, as in the understanding, doth but cure this folly and distraction, and make us reasonable again; it is but the opening of our eyes, and making us wise in the greatest matters. It is not a more unmanly thing to love and plead for blindness, madness, and diseases, and to hate both sight, and health, and wit, than it is to love and plead for sin, and to hate and vilify a holy life.

Grant me but this one thing, that thou wilt but soberly exercise thy reason, about these great, important questions; Where must I abide for ever? What must I do to be saved? What was I created and redeemed for? and I shall hope that thy own understanding, as erroneous as it is, will work out something that will promote thy good. Do but withdraw thyself one hour in a day from company and other business, and consider but as soberly and seriously of thy end and life, as thou knowest the nature and weight of the matter doth require, and I am persuaded thy own reason and conscience will call thee to repentance, and set thee, at least, in a far better way than thou wast in before. When thou walkest alone, or when thou wakest in the night, remember soberly that God is present, that time is hasting to an end, that judgment is at hand, where thou must give account of all thy hours, of thy lusts, and passions, and desires; of all thy thoughts, and words, and deeds; and that thy endless joy or misery dependeth wholly and certainly on this little time. Think but soberly on such things as these,

but one hour in a day or two, and try whether it will not once recover thee to wit and godliness; and folly and sin will vanish before the force of considering reason, as the darkness vanisheth before the light. I entreat thee now as in the presence of God, and as thou wilt answer the denial of so reasonable a request at the day of judgment, that thou wilt but resolve to try this course of a sober, serious consideration, about thy sin, thy duty, thy danger, thy hope, thy account, and thy everlasting state: try it sometimes; especially on the Lord's days; and do but mark the result of all; and whither it is that such sober consideration doth point or lead thee? whether it be not towards a diligent, holy, heavenly life? If thou deny me thus much, God and thy conscience shall bear witness, that thou thoughtest thy salvation of little worth, and therefore mayst justly be denied it.

Would it not be strange that a man should be penitent and godly, that never once thought of the matter with any seriousness in his life? Can so many and great diseases of soul be cured, before you have once soberly considered that you have them, and how great and dangerous they are, and by what remedies they must be cured? Can grace be obtained and exercised, while you never so much as think of it? Can the main business of our lives be done without any serious thoughts; when we think it fit to bestow so many upon the trivial matters of this world? Doth the world and the flesh deserve to be remembered all the day, and week, and year? and doth not God and thy salvation deserve to be thought on one hour in a day, or one day in a week? Judge of these things, but as a man of reason. If thou look that God, who hath given thee reason to guide thy will, and a will to command thy actions, should yet carry thee to heaven like a stone, or save thee against or without thy will, before thou didst ever once soberly think of it, thou mayst have leisure in hell to lament the folly of such expectations.

Direct. vi. 'Suffer not the devil by company, pleasure, or worldly business, to divert or hinder thee from these serious considerations.'

The devil hath but two ways to procure thy damnation. The one is, by keeping thee from any sober remem-

brance of spiritual and eternal things; and the other is, if thou wilt needs think of them, to deceive thee into false, erroneous thoughts. To bring to pass the first of these (which is the most common, powerful means), his ordinary way is by diversion^t: finding thee still something else to do: putting some other thoughts into thy mind, and some other work into thy hand; so that thou canst never have leisure for any sober thoughts of God: whenever the Spirit of God knocks at thy door, thou art so taken up with other company, or other business, that thou canst not hear, or wilt not open to him. Many a time he hath been ready to teach thee, but thou wast not at leisure to hear and learn. Many a time he secretly jogged thy conscience, and checked thee in thy sin, and called thee aside to consider soberly about thy spiritual and everlasting state, when the noise of foolish mirth and pleasures, or the bustles of encumbering cares and business have caused thee to stop thy ears, and put him off, and refuse the motion. And if the abused Spirit of God depart, and leave thee to thy beloved mirth and business, and to thyself, it is but just; and then thou wilt never have a serious, effectual thought of heaven, perhaps, till thou have lost it; nor a sober thought of hell, till thou art in it; unless it be some despairing, or some dull ineffectual thought.

O therefore, as thou lovest thy soul, do not love thy pleasure or business so well as to refuse to treat with the Spirit of God, who comes to offer thee greater pleasures, and to engage thee in a more important business. O lay by all, to hear awhile what God and conscience have to say to thee. They have greater business with thee, than any others that thou conversest with. They have better offers and motions to make to thee, than thou shalt hear from any of thy old companions. If the devil can but take thee up a while, with one pleasure one day, and another business another day, and keep thee from the work that thou camest into the world for, till time be gone, and thou art slipt un-awares into damnation, then he hath his desire, and hath the

^t Even learning and honest studies may be used as a diversion from more necessary things. Saith Petrarch in vita sua, Ingenio sui ad omne bonum et salubre studium apto; sed ad moralem præcipue philosophiam, et ad poeticam prono. Quam ipsam processu temporis neglexi, sacris literis delectatus, in quibus sensi dulcedinem abditam, quam aliquando contempseram; poeticis literis non nisi ad ornamentum reservatis.

end he aimed at, and hath won the day, and thou art lost for ever.

It is like thou settest some limits to thy folly, and purposest to do thus but a little while: but when one pleasure withereth, the devil will provide a fresh one for thee; and when one business is over, which causeth thee to pretend necessity, another, and another, and another will succeed, and thou wilt think thou hast such necessity still, till time is gone, and thou see, too late, how grossly thou wast deceived. Resolve, therefore, that whatever company, or pleasure, or business would divert thee, that thou wilt not be befooled out of thy salvation, nor taken off from minding the one thing necessary. If company plead an interest in thee, know of them whether they are better company than the Spirit of God and thy conscience;—if pleasure would detain thee, inquire whether it be more pure and durable pleasures, than thou mayst have in heaven, by hearkening unto grace;—if business still pretend necessity, inquire whether it be a greater business than to prepare thy soul and thy accounts for judgment, and of greater necessity than thy salvation. If not, let it not have the precedency: if thou be wise, do that first that must needs be done; and let that stand by, that may best be spared. What will it profit thee to win all the world, and lose thy soul? At least, if thou durst say that thy pleasure and business are better than heaven, yet might they sometime be forborn, while thou seriously thinkest of thy salvation.

Direct. vii. 'If thou wouldst be converted and saved, be not a malicious or peevish enemy to those that would convert and save thee: be not angry with them that tell thee of thy sin or duty, as if they did thee wrong or hurt.'

God worketh by instruments: when he will convert a Cornelius, a Peter must be sent for, and willingly heard. When he will recall and save a sinner, he hath usually some public minister or private friend, that shall be a messenger of that searching and convincing truth, which is fit to awaken them, enlighten them, and recover them. If God furnish these instruments with compassion to your souls, and willingness to instruct you, and you will take them for your enemies, and peevishly quarrel with them, and contradict them, and perhaps reproach them, and do them a mischief

for their good will, what an inhuman, barbarous course of ingratitude is this? Will you be angry with men for endeavouring to save you from the fire of hell? Do they endeavour to make any gain or advantage by you? or only to help your souls to heaven? Indeed, if their endeavours did serve any ambitious design of their own, to bring the world (as the pope and his clergy would do) under their own jurisdiction, you had reason then to suspect their fraud. But the truth is, Christ hath purposely appointed his greatest church-officers to be but ministers, even the servants of all, to rule and save men as volunteers, without any coercive power, by the management of his powerful word upon their consciences; and to beseech and entreat the poorest of the flock, as those that are not lords over God's heritage, nor masters of their faith, but their servants in Christ, and helpers of their joy; that so whenever we deliver our message to them, they may see that we exercise not dominion over them, and aim at no worldly honours, or gain, or advantage to ourselves, but at the mere conversion and saving of their souls. Whereas, if he had allowed us to exercise authority as the kings of the Gentiles, and to be called gracious lords, and to encumber ourselves with the affairs of this life, our doctrine would have been rejected by the generality of the world, and we should always have come to them on this great disadvantage, that they would have thought we sought not them, but theirs; and that we preached not for them, but for ourselves, to make a prize of them^u: as the Jesuits, when they attempt the conversion of the Indians, do still find this their great impediment, the princes and people suppose them to pretend the Gospel, but as a means to subjugate them and their dominions to the pope; because they tell them that they must be all subject to the pope, if they will be saved. Now when Christ hath appointed a poor, self-denying, entreating ministry, against whom you can have none of these pretences, to stoop to your feet, with the most submissive entreaties, that you would but turn to God and live, you have no excuse for your own barbarous ingratitude, if you will fly in their faces, and use them as your enemies, and be offended with them

^u 1 Peter v. 2, 3, 4. 2 Cor. x. 4. 2 Cor. v. 19, 20. 2 Cor. i. 24. 1 Cor. iv. 1. 2 Cor. iii. 6. xi. 23. Joel i. 9, 13. 2 Cor. iv. 5. Mark x. 44. Matt. xx. 27. Luke xxii. 24, 25, 26.

for endeavouring to save you. You know they can hold their tithes and livings by smoothing, and cold, and general preaching, as well as by more faithful dealing (if not better): you know they can get no worldly advantage by dealing so plainly with you: you know that they hazard by it, their reputation with such as you; and they cannot be ignorant that it is like to expose them to your ill will and indignation.

And they are men as well as you, and therefore, undoubtedly, desire the good will and the good word of others, and take no pleasure to be scorned or hated: undoubtedly they break through much temptation and reluctancy of the flesh, before they can so far deny themselves as to endeavour your salvation on such terms: and seeing it is all for you, methinks you should be their chief encouragers: if others should oppose them, you should be for them, because they are for you. If I go with a convoy to relieve a besieged garrison, I shall expect opposition from the enemy that besiegeth them; but if the besieged themselves shall shoot at us, and use us as enemies for venturing our lives to relieve them, it is time to be gone, and let them take what they get by it.

Perhaps you think that the preacher, or private admonisher, is too plain with you; but you should consider that self-love is like to make you partial in your own cause, and therefore a more incapable judge than they^x. And you should consider that God hath commanded them to deal plainly, and told them that else the people's blood shall be required at their hands^y. And that God best knoweth what medicine and diet is fittest for your disease; and that the case is of such grand importance (whether you shall live in heaven or hell for ever?) that it is scarce possible for a minister to be too plain and serious with you: and that your disease is so obstinate, that gentler means have been too long frustrate, and therefore sharper must be tried: else why were you not converted by gentler dealing until now? If you fall down in a swoon, or be ready to be drowned, you

^x Seneca scribit, Tam necessarium fuisse Romano populo nasci Catonem, quam Scipionem: alter enim cum hostibus nostris bellum, alter cum moribus gessit. Sen. *Phi. Epist.* 88. p. 288. Elz. 1649.

^y Isa. lviii. 1. Ezek. xviii.

will give leave to the standers-by to handle you a little more roughly than at another time, and will not bring your action against them for laying hands on you, or ruffling your silks or bravery; if your house be on fire, you will give men leave to speak in another manner, than when they modulate their voices into a civil and complimenting tone.

It may be you think that they are censorious in judging you to be unconverted, when you are not; and to be worse and in more danger than you are, and speaking harder of you than you deserve. But it is you that should be most suspicious of yourselves, and afraid in so great a matter of being deceived. A stander-by may see more than a player: I am sure he that is awake may see more of you, than you of yourselves when you are asleep.

But suppose it were as you imagine; it is his love that mistakingly attempteth your good: he intendeth you no harm: it is your salvation that he desireth: it is your damnation that he would prevent. You have cause to love him, and be thankful for his good-will, and not to be angry with him, and reproach him for his mistakes. He is none of those that brings you into the inquisition, and would fine, or imprison, or banish, or burn, or hang, or torment you, in order to convert and save you: the worst he doth, is but to speak those words, which, if true, you are deeply concerned to regard; and if mistaken, can do you no hurt, unless you are the cause yourself. If it be in public preaching, he speaketh generally by descriptions, and not by nomination; no more of you, than of others in your case: nor of you at all, if you are not in that case. If he speak privately to you, there is no witness but yourself; and therefore it is no matter of disgrace. Never, for shame, pretend that thou art willing to be converted and saved, when thou hatest those that would promote it; and art angry with every one that tells thee of thy case, and couldst find in thy heart to stop their mouths, or do them a mischief.

Direct. viii. 'If thou art willing indeed to be converted, do thy best to discover that yet thou art unconverted, and in a lost and miserable state.'

Who will endeavour to cure a disease which he thinks he hath not? or to vomit up the poison which he thinks he ver took, or taketh to be no poison? or to come out of

the ditch, that thinks he is not in it? or who will turn back again, that will not believe but he is in the right way? Who will labour to be converted, that thinks he is converted already? Or who will come to Christ as the physician of his soul, that thinks he is not sick, or is cured already? The common cause that men live and die without the grace of repentance, sanctification, and justification, which should save them, is because they will not believe but that they have it, when they have it not; and that they are penitent, and justified, and sanctified already. It is not my desire to make any of you think worse of your condition than it is; but if you will not know what it is, you will not be fit for recovering grace, nor use the means for your own recovery: you think it is so sad a conclusion, to find yourselves in a state of condemnation, that you are exceeding unwilling to know it or confess it.

But I beseech you consider but these two things: first, either it is true that you are in so miserable a state, or it is not true: if it be not true, the closest trial will but comfort you, by discovering that you are sanctified already: but if it be true, then do you think it will save you to be ignorant of your danger? Will it cure your disease, to believe that you have it not? Will thinking well of yourselves falsely, prove that you are well indeed? Is it the way to grace, to think you have it, when you have it not? Will it bring you to heaven, to think that you are going thither, when you are in the way to hell? Nay, do you not know, that it is the principal temptation of the devil, to keep men from a state of repentance and salvation, to deceive them thus, and persuade them that they are in such a state already? Judge soberly of the case. Do you think if all the impenitent, unconverted sinners in the world were certain that they are indeed in a graceless state, in which if they died, they were past all hope, that they would not quickly look about them, and better understand the offers of a Saviour, and live in continual solicitude and fear, till they found themselves in a safer state? If you were sure yourselves, that you must yet be

^a Bernard. de grad. humil. grad. 8. describeth men's excusing their sins thus "If it may be, they will say, I did not do it; or else, It was no sin, but lawful; or else, I did it not oft or much; or else, I meant no harm; or else, I was persuaded by another, and drawn to it by temptation."

made new creatures, or be damned, would it not set you on work to seek more diligently after grace than ever you have done? The devil knoweth this well enough; that he could scarce keep you quiet this night in his snares, but you would be ready to repent and beg for mercy, and resolve on a new life, before to-morrow, if you were but sure that you are yet in a state of condemnation. And therefore he doth all that he can to hide your sin and danger from your eyes, and to quiet you with the conceit, that though you are sinners, yet you are penitent, pardoned, and safe.

Well, sirs, there can be no harm in knowing the truth. And therefore will you but try yourselves, whether you are unsanctified or not? You were baptised into the name of the Holy Ghost as your Sanctifier; and if now you neglect or mock at sanctification, what do you but deride your baptism, or neglect that which is its sense and end? It doth not so much concern you to know that you live the life of nature, as to know whether sanctification have made you spiritually alive to God.

And let me tell you this for your encouragement, that we do not call you to know that you are unconverted, and unpardoned, and miserable, as men that have no remedy, but must sit down in despair, and be tormented with the fore-knowledge of your endless pains before the time. No; it is but that you may speedily and thankfully accept of Christ, the full remedy, and turn to God, and quickly get out of your sin and terror, and enter into a life of safety and of peace. We desire not your continuance in that life which tendeth to despair and horror: we would have you out of it, if it were in our power before to-morrow; and therefore it is that we would have you understand what danger you are in, that you may go no further, but speedily turn back, and seek for help. And I hope there is no hurt, though there be some present trouble, in such a discovery of your danger as this is.

Well, if you are but willing to know, I shall help you a little to know what you are.

1. If you are persecutors, or haters, or deriders of men, for being diligent and serious in the service of God, and fearful of sinning, and because they go not with the multitude to do evil, it is a certain sign that you are in a state of
ea, if you love not such men, and desire not rather

to be such yourselves, than to be the greatest of the ungodly^a.

2. If you love the world best, and set your affections most on things below, and mind most earthly things; nay, if you seek not first God's kingdom, and the righteousness thereof; and if your hearts be not in heaven, and your affections set on the things that are above; and you prefer not your hopes of life eternal before all the pleasures and prosperity of this world, it is a certain sign that you are but worldly and ungodly men^b.

3. If your estimation, belief and hopes, of everlasting life through Christ, be not such, as will prevail with you to deny yourselves, and forsake father, and mother, and the nearest friends; and house, and land, and life, and all that you have, for Christ, and for these hopes of a happiness hereafter, you are no true Christians, nor in a state of saving grace^c.

4. If you have not been converted, regenerated, and sanctified by the Spirit of Jesus Christ, making you spiritual, and causing you to mind the things of the Spirit above the things of the flesh. If this Spirit be not in you, and you walk not after it, but after the flesh; making provision for the flesh, to satisfy its desires, and preferring the pleasing of the flesh, before the pleasing of God, it is certain that you are in a state of death^d.

5. If you have any known sin which you do not hate, and had not rather leave it than keep it, and do not pray, and strive, and watch against it, as far as you know and observe it; but rather excuse it, plead for it, desire it, and are loath to part with it, so that your will is habitually more for it than against it, it is a sign of an impenitent, unrenewed heart^e.

^a See Gal. iv. 29. Acts xxvi. 11. 1 Tim. i. 13. 1 Pet. iv. 2—5. Psal. xv. 4. 1 John iii. 8—15. John xiii. 35. Psal. lxxxiv. 10.

^b See this in Matt. vi. 19—21. 33. Phil. iii. 18—20. Col. iii. 1—4. Psal. lxxiii. 25. 1 John ii. 15—17. James i. 27. Luke xii. 20, 21. xvi. 25.

^c See Luke xiv. 26, 33. Matt. x. 37—39. xiii. 21, 22.

^d See Matt. xviii. 3. John iii. 3, 5, 6. Heb. xii. 14. Rom. viii. 1, 5—13. xiii. 13, 14. Luke xvi. 19, 25. xii. 20, 21. Heb. xi. 25, 26. 2 Cor. iv. 16—18. v. 7. Rom. viii. 17, 18.

^e 1 John iii. 3, 4, 6—10. 24. Gal. v. 16. 19—25. Rom. vii. 22. 24. viii. 13. Luke xiii. 3, 5. Matt. v. 19, 20. 2 Tim. ii. 19. Psal. v. 5. Luke xiii. 27.

6. If you love not the Word, as it is a light discovering your sin and duty, but only as it is a general truth, or as it reproveth others: if you love not the most searching preaching, and would not know how bad you are, and come not to the light, that your deeds may be manifest, it is a sign that you are not children of the light, but of the darkness^f.

7. If the laws of your Creator and Redeemer be not of greatest power and authority with you, and the will and word of God cannot do more with you, than the word or will of any man; and the threatenings and promises of God be not more prevalent with you, than the threats or promises of any men, it is a sign that you take not God for your God, but in heart are atheists and ungodly men^g.

8. If you have not, in a deliberate covenant or resolution, devoted and given up yourselves to God as your Father and felicity, to Jesus Christ as your only Saviour, and your Lord and King, and to the Holy Ghost as your Sanctifier, to be made holy by him, desiring that your heart and life should be perfectly conformed to the will of God, and that you might know him, and love him, and enjoy him more; you are void of godliness and true Christianity: for this is the very covenant which you make in baptism, which you call your christening^h.

I have now plainly shewed you, and fully proved, from the Word of God, by what infallible signs an ungodly man may know that he is ungodly, if he will. May you not know whether it be thus with you, if you are willing to know? May you not know, if you will, whether your desire and design of life, be more for this world, or that to come? and whether heaven or earth be preferred and sought first? and whether your fleshly prosperity and pleasure, or your soul be principally cared for and regarded? May you not know, if you will, whether you love or loathe the serious worshippers of Godⁱ? and whether you had rather be delivered from

^f John iii. 19—21.

^g Luke xix. 27. Matt. vii. 21—23. 26. Dan. iii. 16—18. vi. 5. 10. Jer. xvii. 5, 6. Luke xii. 4. Acts v. 29. Psal. xiv. 1, &c.

^h Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. 2 Cor. viii. 5. 1 Cor. vi. 17. John i. 10—12. Gal. iv. 6. Rom. viii. 14, 15.

ⁱ Atque haud scio, an pietate adversus Deos sublata, fides etiam, et societas humani generis, et una excellentissima virtus, justitia, tollatur. Cic. Nat. D. i. 4.

your sins or keep them? and whether your wills be more against them, or for them? and whether you love a holy life or not? and whether you had rather be perfect in holiness and obedience to God, or be excused from it, and please the flesh? and whether you had rather be such a one as Paul, or as Cæsar? a persecuted saint in poverty and contempt, or a persecuting conqueror or king? May you not know, if you will, whether you love a searching ministry, that telleth you of the worst, and would not deceive you? May you not know, whether you are resolvedly devoted and given up to God, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, as your Father and felicity, your Saviour and your Sanctifier; and whether the scope, design and business of your lives is more for God, or for the flesh, for heaven or earth; and which it is that bears the sway, and which it is that comes behind, and hath but the leavings of the other, or only so much as it can spare? Certainly these are things so near you, and so remarkable in your hearts, that you may come to the knowledge of them if you will. But if you will not, who can help it?

What a sottish cavil is it then of those ignorant men, that ask us, when we tell them of these things, Whether ever we were in heaven?—or ever saw the book of life?—and how we can tell who shall be saved, and who shall be damned? If it were about a May-game this jesting were more seasonable; but to talk thus distractedly about the matters of salvation and damnation, and to make such a jest of the damning of souls, is a kind of foolery that hath no excuse. What though we never were in heaven? and never saw the book of life? dost thou think I never saw the Scriptures? Why, wretched sinner, dost thou not know, that Christ came down from heaven, to tell us who they be that shall come thither, and who they be that shall be shut out? And did he not know what he said? Is God the Governor of the world, and hath he not a law by which he governeth them? and can I not tell by the law, who they be that the Judge will condemn or save? What else is the law made for, but to be the rule of life, and the rule of judgment? Read Psal. i. and xv. Matt. v. vii. and xxv., and all the texts which I even now cited, and see in them whether God hath not told you who they be that shall be saved, and who they be that shall be condemned. Nay, see whether this be not the very business of the Word of God?

And do you think that he hath written in vain? But some men have loved ignorance and ungodliness so long, till the Spirit of grace hath cast them off, and left them to the sottishness of their carnal minds, so that “they have eyes and see not, and ears and hear not, and hearts and understand not.” But those that are willing and diligent to know their sin and duty, in order to their recovery, God will not let them search in vain, nor hide the remedy from their eyes.

Direct. ix. ‘When you have found yourselves in a state of sin and death, understand and consider what a state that is.’

It may be you will think it a tolerable condition, and linger in it, as if you were safe; or delay your repentance, as if it were a matter of no great haste; unless you open your eyes, and look round about you, and see in how slippery a place you stand. Let me name some instances of the misery of an unregenerate, graceless state, and then judge of it as the Word of God directs you.

1. As long as you are unconverted, you must needs be loathsome and abominable to God^k. His holy nature is unreconcilable to sin, and would be unreconcilable to sinners, if it were not that he can cleanse and purify them. Did you know what sin is, and know God’s holiness, you would understand this much better. Your own averseness to God, and your dislike of the holiness of his laws and servants, might tell you what thoughts he hath of you. “He hateth all the workers of iniquity^l.” Indeed he taketh you for his enemies, and as such he will handle you, if you be not converted. I know many persons that are most deeply guilty, especially men of honour and esteem in the world, would scorn to have this title given to themselves; but verily God is not fearful of offending them, nor so tender of their defiled

^k Mira Ciceronis fictio in Lib. 1. de Univers. Atque ille, qui recte et honeste curriculum vivendi a natura datum confecerit, ad illud astrum, quo cum aptus fuerit, re-vertetur. Qui autem immoderate et intemperate vixerit, eum secundus ortus in figuram muliebrem transferet. Et si ne tum quidem finem vitiorum faciet: gravius etiam jactabitur, et in suis moribus simillimas figuras pecudum, et ferarum transferetur: neque malorum terminum prius adspiciet, quam illam sequi cœperit conversionem, quam habebat in se ipse, ejusdem et unius, simul innatam. Quod tum eveniet, cum illa, quæ ex igne, aëre, atque terra, turbulenta, et rationis expertia insederiant, denique iratione depulerit, et ad primam, ut optimam affectionem animi pervenerit. Op. vol. vii. p. 941.

^l Psal. v. 5.

honour, as they are of their own, or as they expect the preacher should be. If those be the king's enemies that refuse his government and set up another, then those are the enemies of God, and of the Redeemer, and of the Holy Ghost, that set up the base concupiscence of their flesh, and the honour and prosperity of this world, and the will of man, and refuse the government of God their Creator and Redeemer, and refuse the sanctifying teachings and operations of the Holy Ghost. Read Luke xix. 27.

Some think it strange that any men should be called "haters of God;" and I believe you will find it hard to meet with that man that will confess it by himself, till converting grace or hell constrain him. And indeed if God himself had not charged men with that sin, and called them by that name, we should scarce have found belief or patience when we had endeavoured to convince the world of it. Entreat but the worst of men to repent of hating God, and try how they will take it. Yet they may read that name in Scripture^m. Did not the Jews hate Christ, think you, when they murdered him? and when they hated all his followers for his sakeⁿ? And doth not Christ say, "that they shall be hated for his sake," not only of the Jews, but also of "all nations, and all men^o." Even by the "world^p." And this was a hating "both Christ and his Father^q." But you will say, It is not possible that any man can hate God. I answer, how then came the devils to hate him? Yea, every ungodly man hateth God: indeed no man hateth him as good, or as merciful to them; but they hate him as holy and just, as one that will not let him have the pleasure of sin, without damning them: as one engaged in justice to cast them into hell, if they die without conversion: and as one that hath made so pure and precise a law to govern them, and convinceth them of sin, and calls them to that repentance and holiness which they hate. Why did the world hate Christ himself? He tells you, "The world cannot hate you, but me it hateth, because I testify against it, that the works thereof are evil^r." "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil^s."

^m Rom. i. 30. Psal. lxxxi. 15. Luke xix. 14.

ⁿ Matt. x. 22. Mark xiii. 13.

^o Matt. xxiv. 9. x. 22.

^p John xvii. 14. xv. 17—19, &c.

^q John xv. 23, 24.

^r John vii. 7.

^s John iii. 19.

Nay, it is a wonder of blindness, that this God-hating world and age, should not perceive that they are God-haters, while they hate his servants to the death, and implacably rage against them, and hate his holy ways and kingdom, and bend all their power and interest in most of the kingdoms of the world, against his interest and his people upon earth: while the devil fighteth his battles against Christ through the world, by their hands, they will yet confess the devil's malice against God, but deny their own; as if he used their hands without their hearts. Well! poor, wretched worms! instead of denying your enmity to him, lament it, and know that he also taketh you for his enemies, and will prove too hard for you when you have done your worst. Read Psal. ii., and tremble, and submit. This is especially the case of persecutors and open enemies; but in their measure also of all that would not have him to reign over them. And therefore Christ came to reconcile us unto God, and God to us; and it is only the sanctified that are reconciled to him^t. “The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God; nor indeed can be^u.” Mark that text well.

2. As long as you are unsanctified, you are unjustified and unpardoned: you are under the guilt of all the sins that ever you committed: every sinful thought, word and deed, of which the least deserveth hell, is on your score, to be answered for by yourself: and what this signifieth, the threatenings of the law will tell you^x. There is no sin forgiven to an impenitent, unconverted sinner.

3. And no wonder, when the unconverted have no special interest in Christ. The pardon and life that is given by God, is given in and with the Son^y: “God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son: he that hath the Son, hath life; and he that hath not the Son, hath not life^z.” Till we are members of Christ, we have no part in the pardon and salvation purchased by him: and ungodly sinners are not his members. So that Jesus Christ, who is the hope and life of all his own, doth leave thee as he found thee: and that is not the worst: for,

4. It will be far worse with the impenitent rejecters of

^t See Col. i. 21. Phil. iii. 18. 1 Cor. xv. 25. Rom. v. 10.

^u Rom. viii. 7.

^x See Acts xxvi. 18. Mark iv. 12. Col. i. 14.

^y Rom. viii. 9.

^z 1 John v. 10—12.

the grace of Christ, than if they had never heard of a Redeemer. For it cannot be, that God having provided so precious a remedy for sinful, miserable souls, should suffer it to be despised and rejected, without increased punishment. Was it not enough that you had disobeyed your great Creator, but you must also set light by a most gracious Redeemer, that offered you pardon, purchased by his blood, if you would but have come to God by him? Yea, the Saviour that you despised shall be himself your Judge, and the grace and mercy which you set so light by, shall be the heaviest aggravation of your sin and misery. For “how shall you escape, if you neglect so great salvation^a?” “And of how much sorer punishment (than the despisers of Moses’ law) shall they be thought worthy, who have trodden under foot the Son of God, &c.^b.”

5. The very prayers and sacrifice of the wicked are abominable to God (except such as contain their returning from their wickedness). So that terror ariseth to you from that which you expect should be your help^c.

6. Your common mercies do but increase your sin and misery (till you return to God): your carnal hearts turn all to sin; “Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled, and unbelieving, is nothing pure: but even their mind and conscience is defiled^d.”

7. While you are unsanctified, you are impotent, and dead to any holy, acceptable work: when you should redeem your time, and prepare for eternity, and try your states, or pray, or meditate, or do good to others, you have no heart to any such spiritual works: your minds are biassed against them^e. And it is not the excusable impotency of such, as would do good, but cannot: but it is the malicious impotency of the wicked (the same with that of devils), that cannot do good, because they will not; and will not, because they have blind, malicious, and ungodly hearts, which makes their sin so much the greater^f.

8. While you have unsanctified hearts, you have at all times the seed and disposition unto every sin; and if you commit not the worst, it is because some providence restraining the tempter hindereth you. No thanks to you that

^a Heb. ii. 3.^b Heb. x. 29.^c Prov. xv. 8. xxi. 27. Isa. i. 13.^d Tit. i. 15.^e Rom. viii. 7.^f Tit. i. 16.

you do not daily commit idolatry, blasphemy, theft, murder, adultery, &c. It is in your hearts to do it, when you have but temptation and opportunity; and will be, till you are renewed by sanctifying grace.

9. Till you are sanctified you are heirs of death and hell^a, even under the curse, and condemned already in point of law, though judgment have not passed the final sentence^b. And nothing is more certain, than that you had been damned and undone for ever, if you had died before you had been renewed by the Holy Ghost; and that yet this will be your miserable portion, if you should die unsanctified. Think, then, what a life you have lived until now? and think what it is to live any longer in such a case, in which if you die, you are certain to be damned. Conversion may save you, but unbelief and self-flattery will not save you from this endless misery^c.

10. As long as you are unsanctified, you are hasting to this misery: sin is like to get more rooting; and your hearts to be more hardened, and at enmity with grace; and God more provoked; and the Spirit more grieved; and you are every day nearer to your final doom, when all these things will be more sensibly considered, and better understood^d.

Thus I have given you a brief account of the case of unrenewed souls, and but a brief one, because I have done it before more largely^e.

Direct. x. 'When you have found out how sad a condition you are in, consider what there is in sin to make you amends or repair your loss, that should be any hindrance to your conversion.'

Certainly you will not continue for nothing (if you know it to be nothing), in so dangerous and doleful a case as this. And yet you do it for that which is much worse than nothing, not considering what you do. Sit down sometimes and well bethink you, what recompence the world or sin will make you, for your God, your souls, your hopes, and all; when they

^a Unus gehennæ ignis est in inferno, sed non uno modo omnes excruciat peccatores. Uniuscujusque enim quantum exigit culpa, tantum illic sentitur et pæna: nam sicut hic unus sol non omnia corpora æqualiter calefacit, ita illic unus ignis animas pro qualitate criminum dissimiliter exurit. Hugo Etherianus de Anim. regres. cap. 12. "Similis enim undique in infernum descensus est," saith Anaxagoras (in Laert.) to one that only lamented that he must die in a strange country. Diog. Laert. lib. ii. Segm. 11. Amst. 1692. p. 86.

^b See John iii. 18, 19. 36.

^c 1. 3. 2 Pet. ii. 3.

^d Heb. xii. 14. Heb. ii. 3. Matt. xxv. ult.

^e Treatise of Conversion.

are lost and past recovery? Think what it will then avail or comfort you, that once you were honoured, and had a great estate; that once you fared of the best, and had your delicious cups, and merry hours, and sumptuous attire, and all such pleasures. Think whether this will abate the horrors of death, or put by the wrath of God, or the sentence of your condemnation; or whether it will ease a tormented soul in hell? If not, think how small, and short, and silly a commodity and pleasure it is, that you buy so dear; and what a wise man can see in it, that should make it seem worth the joys of heaven, and worth your enduring everlasting torments. What is it that is supposed worth all this? Is it the snare of preferment? Is it vexing riches? Is it befooling honours? Is it distracting cares? Is it swinish luxury or lust? Is it beastly pleasures? Or what is it else that you will buy at so wonderful dear a rate? O lamentable folly of ungodly men! O foolish sinners! unworthy to see God! and worthy to be miserable! O strangely corrupted heart of man, that can sell his Maker, his Redeemer, and his salvation, at so base a price!

Direct. xi. 'And when you are casting up your account, as you put all that sin and the world will do for you in the one end of the scales, so put into the other the comforts both of this life, and of that to come, which you must part with for your sins.'

Search the Scriptures, and consider how happy the saints of God are there described. Think what it is, to have a purified, cleansed soul; to be free from the slavery of the flesh and its concupiscence; to have the sensitive appetite in subjection unto reason, and reason illuminated and rectified by faith; to be alive to God, and disposed and enabled to love and serve him; to have access to him in prayer, with boldness and assurance to be heard; to have a sealed pardon of all our sins, and an interest in Christ, who will answer for them all and justify us; to be the children of God, and the heirs of heaven; to have peace of conscience, and the joyful hopes of endless joys; to have communion with the Father, through the Son, by the Spirit, and to have that Spirit dwelling in us; and working to our further holiness and joy; to have communion with the saints; and the help and comfort of all God's ordinances, and to be under his many pre-

cious promises, and under his protection and provision in his family, and to cast all our care upon him; to delight ourselves daily in the remembrance and renewed experiences of his love, and in our too little knowledge of him, and love to him, and in the knowledge of his Son, and of the mysteries of the Gospel; to have all things work together for our good, and to be able with joy to welcome death, and to live as in heaven in the foresight of our everlasting happiness. I would have orderly here given you a particular account of the privileges of renewed souls, but that I have done so much in that already in my "Treatise of Conversion," and "Saints' Rest." This taste may help you to see what you lose, while you abide in an unconverted state.

Direct. XII. 'When you have thus considered of the condition you are in, consider also whether it be a condition to be rested in one day.'

If you die unconverted; you are past all hope; for out of hell there is no redemption: and certain you are to die ere long; and uncertain whether it will be this night^a. You never lay down with assurance that you should rise again; you never went out of doors with assurance to return; you never heard a sermon with assurance that you should hear another; you never drew one breath with assurance that you should draw another: a thousand accidents and diseases are ready to stop your breath, and end your time, when God will have it so. And if you die this night in an unregenerate state, there is no more time, or help, or hope. And is this a case then for a wise man to continue in a day, that can do any thing towards his own recovery? Should you delay another day or hour, before you fall down at the feet of Christ, and cry for mercy, and return to God, and resolve upon a better course? May I not well say to thee, as the angels unto Lot, "Arise, lest thou be consumed: escape for thy life; look not behind theeⁿ."

Direct. XIII. 'When thou art resolved, past thy waverings and delays, give up thyself entirely and unreservedly to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as thy happiness,

^a Luke xii. 20. Alienus est à fide qui ad agendam poenitentiam tempus expectat senectutis. Jo. Benedictus Paris. in Annot. in Lac. xii. Multos vitam différentes mors incerta prævenit. Id. ib. ex Senec.

ⁿ Gen. xix. 15. 17. 22.

thy Saviour, and thy Sanctifier, in a hearty consent to the covenant of grace.'

This is thy Christianity; thy espousals with Christ. It is sacramentally done in baptism; but till it be personally owned, and heartily renewed by men at age, they have no reason to be numbered with adult believers, nor to dream of a part in the blessings of the covenant. It is a pity it is not made a more serious, solemn work, for men thus to renew their covenant with God. (For which I have written in a "Treatise of Confirmation," but hitherto in vain.) However, do it seriously thyself: it is the greatest and weightiest action of thy life.

To this end, peruse well the covenant of grace which is offered thee in the gospel: understand it well. In it God offereth, notwithstanding thy sins, to be thy reconciled God and Father in Christ, and to accept thee as a son, and an heir of heaven.

The Son offereth to be thy Saviour, to justify thee by his blood and grace, and teach thee, and govern thee as thy Head, in order to thy everlasting happiness. The Holy Spirit offereth to be thy Sanctifier, Comforter, and Guide, to overcome all the enmity of the devil, the world, and the flesh, in order to the full accomplishment of thy salvation; nothing is expected of thee, in order to thy title to the benefits of this covenant, but deliberately, unfeignedly, entirely to consent to it, and to continue that consent, and perform what thou consentest to perform, and that by the help of the grace which will be given thee. See, therefore, that thou well deliberate of the matter, but without delay; and count what thou shouldst gain or lose by it. And if thou find that thou art like to be a loser in the end, and knowest of any better way, even take it, and boast of it, when thou hast tried the end; but if thou art past doubt, that there is no way but this, dispatch it resolutely and seriously.

And take heed of one thing, lest thou say, "Why, this is no more than every body knoweth, and than I have done a hundred times, to give up myself in covenant to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." Dost thou know it, and yet hast thou not done it? Or hast thou done it with thy lips, and not unfeignedly with thy heart? Lament it as one of thy greatest sins, that thou hast thus provokingly dallied

with God; and admire his mercy, that he will yet vouchsafe to enter into covenant with one, that hath hypocritically profaned his covenant. If thou hadst ever seriously thus covenanted and given up thyself to God, thou wouldst not have neglected him by an ungodly life, nor lived after to the devil, the world, and the flesh, which were renounced. I tell you, the making of this Christian vow and covenant with God in Christ, is the act of greatest consequence of any in all thy life, and to be done with the greatest judgment, and reverence, and sincerity, and foresight, and firm resolution; of any thing that ever thou dost. And if it were done sincerely, by all that do it ignorantly, for fashion, only with the lips, then all professed Christians would be saved; whereas now, the abusers of that holy name and covenant will have the deepest place in hell. Write it out on thy heart, and put thy heart and hand to it resolvedly, and stand to thy consent, and all is thine own: conversion is wrought when this is done.

Direct. XIV. 'In present performance of thy covenant with God, away with thy former sinful life; and see that thou sin wilfully no more; but as far as thou art able, avoid the temptations which have deceived thee.'

God will never be reconciled to thy sins: if he be reconciled to thy person, it is as thou art justified by Christ; and sanctified by the Spirit: he entertaineth thee as one that turneth with repentance from sin to him. If thou wilfully or negligently go on in thy former course of sin, thou shewest that thou wast not sincerely resolved in thy covenant with God.

I know infirmities and imperfections will not be so easily cast off, but will cleave to thee in thy best obedience, till the day of thy perfection come. But I speak of gross and wilful sin; such as thou canst forbear, if thou be but sincerely, though imperfectly, willing°.

Hast thou been a profane swearer or curser, or used to take God's name in vain, or used to backbiting, slandering, lying, or to ribald, filthy talk? It is in thy power to forbear these sins, if thou be but willing. Say not, I fall into them through custom before I am aware; for that is a sign that

° Næ illi falsi sunt, qui diversissimas res pariter expectant, ignaviæ voluptatem et præmia virtutis. Sallust. Delph. Lond. 1776. p. 131.

thou art not sincerely willing to forsake them. If thou wert truly penitent, and thy will sincerely opposite to these sins, thou wouldst be more tender and fearful to offend, and resolved against them, and make a greater matter of them, and abhor them, and not commit them, and say, I did it before I was aware; no more than thou wouldst spit in the face of thy father, or curse thy mother, or slander thy dearest friend, or speak treason against the king, and say, I did it through custom before I was aware. Sin will not be so played with by those that have been soundly humbled for it, and resolved against it.

Hast thou been a drunkard, or tipler, spending thy precious hours in an ale-house, prating over a pot, in the company of foolish, tempting sinners? It is in thy power, if thou be truly willing, to do so no more. If thou love and choose such company, and places, and actions, and discourse, how canst thou say thou art willing to forsake them, or that thy heart is changed? If thou do not love and choose them, how canst thou commit them, when none compels thee? No one carrieth thee to the place; no one forceth thee to sin; if thou do it, it is because thou wilt do it, and lovest it. If thou be in good earnest with God, and wilt be saved indeed, and art not content to part with heaven for thy cups and company; away with them presently, without delay.

Hast thou lived in wantonness, fornication, uncleanness, gluttony, gaming, pastimes, sensuality, to the pleasing of thy flesh, while thou hast displeased God? O bless the patience and mercy of the Lord, that thou wast not cut off all this while, and damned for thy sin before thou didst repent! And, as thou lovest thy soul, delay no longer; but make a stand, and go no further, not one step further in the way which thou knowest leads to hell. If thou knowest that this is the way to thy damnation, and yet wilt go on, what pity dost thou deserve from God or man?

If thou have been a covetous worldling, or an ambitious seeker of honour or preferment in the world, so that thy gain, or rising, or reputation, hath been the game which thou hast followed, and hath taken thee up instead of God and life eternal; away now with these known deceits, and hunt not after vanity and vexation. Thou knowest beforehand

what it will prove when thou hast overtaken it, and hast enjoyed all that it can yield thee; and how useless it will be as to thy comfort or happiness at last.

Surely, if men were willing, they are able to forbear such sins, and to make a stand, and look before, to prevent their misery: therefore God thus pleads with them, “Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do well^p,” &c. “Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting covenant with you. Seek ye the Lord while he may be found; call ye upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon^q.” Christ supposeth that the foresight of judgment may restrain men from sin, when he saith, “Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon thee^r.” Can the presence of men restrain a fornicator; and the presence of the judge restrain a thief, yea, or the foresight of the assizes? And shall not the presence of God, with the foresight of judgment and damnation restrain thee? Remember, that impenitent sin and damnation are conjoined. If you will cause one, God will cause the other. Choose one, and you shall not choose whether you will have the other. If you will have the serpent, you shall have the sting.

Direct. xv. ‘If thou have sincerely given up thyself to God, and consented to his covenant, shew it, by turning the face of thy endeavours and conversation quite another way, and by seeking heaven more fervently and diligently than ever thou soughtest the world, or fleshly pleasures.’

Holiness consisteth not in a mere forbearance of a sensual life, but principally in living unto God. The principle, or heart of holiness is within, and consisteth in the love of God, and of his word, and ways, and servants, and honour, and interest in the world, and in the soul’s delight in God, and the word and ways of God, and in its inclination

^p Isa. i. 16,—18.

^q Isa. lv. 2, 3, 6, 7.

^r John v. 14. viii. 11.

towards him, and desire after him, and care to please him, and loathness to offend him. The expression of it in our lives, consisteth in the constant, diligent exercise of this internal life, according to the directions of the Word of God. If thou be a believer, and hast subjected thyself to God, as thy absolute sovereign, king, and judge, it will then be thy work to obey and please him, as a child his father, or a servant his master^a. Do you think that God will have servants, and have nothing for them to do? Will one of you commend or reward your servant for doing nothing, and take it at the year's end for a satisfactory answer or account, if he say, I have done no harm? God calleth you not only to do no harm, but to love and serve him with all your heart, and soul, and might. If you have a better master than you had before, you should do more work than you did before. Will you not serve God more zealously than you served the devil? Will you not labour harder to save your souls than you did to damn them? Will you not be more zealous in good, than you were in evil? "What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life^b." If you are true believers, you have now laid up your hopes in heaven, and will therefore set yourselves to seek it, as worldlings set themselves to seek the world. And a sluggish wish, with heartless, lazy, dull endeavours, is no fit seeking of eternal joys. A creeping pace beseemeth not a man that is in the way to heaven; especially who went faster in the way to hell. This is not running as for our lives. You may well be diligent and make haste, where you have so great encouragement and help, and where you may expect so good an end, and where you are sure you shall never, in life or death, have cause to repent of any just endeavours, and where every step of your way is pure, and clean, and delectable, and paved with mercies, and fortified and secured by Divine protection; and where Christ is your conductor, and so many have sped so well before you, and the wisest and best in the world are your companions. Live then as men that have changed their master, their end, their

^a Mal. i. 6.^b Rom. vi. 21, 22.

hopes, their way and work. Religion layeth not men to sleep, though it be the only way to rest. It awakeneth the sleepy soul to higher thoughts, and hopes, and labours, than ever it was well acquainted with before. "He that is in Christ, is a new creature; old things are past away, behold, all things are become new^u." You never sought which would pay for all your cost and diligence till now; you never were in a way that you might make haste in, without repenting of your haste, till now. How glad should you be that mercy hath brought you into the right way, after the wanderings of such a sinful life? And your gladness and thankfulness should now be shewed, by your cheerful diligence and zeal. As Christ did not raise up Lazarus from the dead, to do nothing, or live to little purpose (though the Scripture giveth us not the history of his life); so did he not raise you from the death of sin, to live idly, or to be unprofitable in the world. He that giveth you his Spirit, to be a principle of heavenly life within you, expecteth that you stir up the gift that he hath given you, and live according to that heavenly principle.

Direct. xvi. 'Engage thyself in the cheerful, constant use of the means and helps appointed by God, for thy confirmation and salvation.'

He can never expect to attain the end, that will not be persuaded to use the means. Of yourselves you can do nothing. God giveth his help, by the means which he hath appointed and fitted to your help. Of the use of these, I shall treat more fully afterwards; I am now only to name them to thee, that thou mayst know what it is thou hast to do.

1. That you must hear or read the Word of God, and other good books which expound it and apply it, I shewed you before. The new-born Christian doth incline to this; as the new-born child doth to the breast, "Laying aside all malice, and guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as new-born babes that desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby^x." The blessed man's "delight is in the law of the Lord, and therein doth he meditate day and night^y."

2. Another means is the public worshipping of God in

^u 2 Cor. v. 17.

^x 1 Pet. ii. 1, 2.

^y Psal. i. 2, 3.

communion with his church and people. Besides the benefit of the word there preached, the prayers of the church are effectual for the members; and it raiseth the soul to holy joys, to join with well ordered assemblies of the saints, in the praises of the Almighty. The assemblies of holy worshippers of God, are the places of his delight, and must be the places of our delight. They are most like to the celestial society, that sound forth the praises of the glorious Jehovah, with purest minds and cheerful voice. "In his temple doth every one speak of his glory^a." In such a choir, what soul will not be rapt up with delight, and desire to join in the concert and harmony? In such a flame of united desires and praises, what soul so cold and dull that will not be inflamed, and with more than ordinary facility and alacrity fly up to God?

3. Another means is private prayer unto God. When God would tell Ananias that Paul was converted, he saith of him, "Behold, he prayeth^a." Prayer is the breath of the new creature. The spirit of adoption given to every child of God is a spirit of prayer, and teacheth them to cry "Abba, Father," and helpeth their infirmities, when they know not what to pray for as they ought, and when words are wanting, it (as it were) intercedeth for them with groans, which they cannot express in words. And God knoweth the meaning of the Spirit in those groans^b. The first workings of grace are in desires after grace, provoking the soul to fervent prayer, by which more grace is speedily obtained. "Ask," then, "and ye shall have; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you^c."

4. Another means to be used is confession of sin; not only to God (for so every wicked man may do, because he knoweth that God is already acquainted with it all, and this is no addition to his shame: he so little regardeth the eye of God, that he is more ashamed when it is known to men): but in three cases, confession must be made also to man. 1. In case you have wronged man, and are thus bound to make him satisfaction: as if you have robbed him, defrauded him, slandered him, or borne false witness against him.

^a Psalm xxix. 9.^a Acts ix. 11.^b Gal. iv. 6. Rom. viii. 15. 26, 27.^c Luke xi. 9.

2. In case you are children, or servants, that are under the government of parents and masters, and are called by them to give an account of your actions: you are bound then to give a true account. 3. In case you have need of the counsel or prayers of others, for the settling of your consciences in peace: in this case, you must so far open your case to them, as is necessary to their effectual help for your recovery. For if they know not the disease, they will be unfit to apply the remedy. In these cases, it is true, that "he that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but he that confesseth and forsaketh them, shall have mercy^d."

5. Another means to be used, is the familiar company, and holy converse with humble, sincere, experienced Christians. The Spirit that is in them, and breatheth, and acteth by them, will kindle the like holy flames in you. Away with the company of idle, prating, sensual men, that can talk of nothing but their worldly wealth, or business; or their reputations, or their appetites and lusts; associate yourselves with them that go the way to heaven, if you resolve yourselves to go in it. O what a deal of difference will you find between these two sorts of companions! The one sort, if you have any thoughts of repentance, would stifle them, and laugh you out of the use of your reason, into their own distracted mirth and dotage: and if you have any serious thoughts of your salvation, or any inclinations to repent and be wise, they will do much to divert them, and hold you in the power and snares of satan, till it be too late: if you have any zeal, or heavenly-mindedness, they will do too much to quench it, and fetch down your minds to earth again. The other sort will speak of things of so great weight and moment, and that with seriousness and reverence, as will tend to raise and quicken your souls; and possess you with a taste of the heavenly things which they discourse of; they will encourage you by their own experiences, and direct you by that truth which hath directed them, and zealously communicate what they have received: they will pray for you, and teach you how to pray: they will give the example of holy, humble, obedient lives; and lovingly admonish you of your duties, and reprove your sins. In a word, as the carnal mind doth savour the things

^d Prov. xxviii. 13.

of the flesh, and is enmity against God, the company of such will be a powerful means to infect you with their plague, and make you such, if you were escaped from them; much more to keep you such, if you are not escaped: and as they that are spiritual, do mind the things of the Spirit, so their converse tendeth to make you spiritually-minded, as they are^e. Though there are some useful qualities and gifts in some that are ungodly, and some lamentable faults in many that are spiritual; yet experience will shew you so great a difference between them in the main, in heart and life, as will make you the more easily believe the difference that will be between them in the life to come.

6. Another means is serious meditation on the life to come, and the way thereto: which though all cannot manage so methodically as some, yet all should in some measure and season be acquainted with it.

7. The last means is, to choose some prudent, faithful guide and counsellor for your soul, to open those cases, which are not fit for all to know; and to resolve and advise you in cases that are too hard for you: not to lead you blindfold after the interest of any seduced or ambitious men, nor to engage you to his singular conceits, against the Scripture or the church of God; but to be to your soul, as a physician to your body, or a lawyer to your estates, to help you where they are wiser than you, and where you need their helps.

Resolve now, that instead of your idle company and pastime, your excessive cares and sinful pleasures, you will wait on God in the seasonable use of these his own appointed means; and you will find, that he appointed them not in vain, and that you shall not lose your labour.

Direct. xvii. 'That in all this you may be sincere, and not deceived by an hypocritical change, be sure that God be all your confidence, and all your hopes be placed in heaven; and that there be no secret reserve in your hearts, for the world and flesh; and that you divide not your hearts between God and the things below, nor take not up with the religion of an hypocrite, which giveth God what the flesh can spare.'

When the devil cannot keep you from a change and re-

^e Rom. viii. 7, 8.

formation, he will seek to deceive you with a superficial change and half reformation, which goeth not to the root, nor doth recover the heart to God, nor deliver it entirely to him. If he can by a partial, deceitful change, persuade you that you are truly renewed and sanctified, and fix you there that you go no further, you are as surely his, as if you had continued in your grosser sins. And, of all other, this is the most common and dangerous cheat of souls; when they think to halve it between God and the world, and to secure their fleshly interest of pleasure and prosperity, and their salvation too; and so they will needs serve God and mammon.

This is the true character of a self-deceiving hypocrite. He is neither so fully persuaded of the certain truth of the Scripture and the life to come, nor yet so mortified to the flesh and world, as to take the joys of heaven for his whole portion, and to subject all his worldly prosperity and hopes thereunto, and to part with all things in this world, when it is necessary to the securing of his salvation: and therefore he will not lose his hold of present things, nor forsake his worldly interest for Christ, as long as he can keep it. Nor will he be any further religious, than may stand with his bodily welfare; resolving never to be undone by his godliness; but in the first place to save himself, and his prosperity in the world, as long as he can: and therefore he is truly a carnal, worldly-minded man; being denominated from what is predominant in him. And yet, because he knoweth that he must die, and for aught he knows, he may then find, against his will, that there is another life which he must enter upon; lest the Gospel should prove true, he must have some religion: and therefore he will take up as much as will stand with his temporal welfare, hoping that he may have both that and heaven hereafter; and he will be as religious as the predominant interest of the flesh will give him leave. He is resolved rather to venture his soul, than to be here undone: and that is his first principle. But he is resolved to be as godly as will stand with a worldly, fleshly life: that is his second principle. And he will hope for heaven as the end of such a way as this: that is his third. Therefore he will place most of his religion in those things which are most consistent with worldliness and carnality,

and will not cost his flesh too dear; as being of this or that opinion, church, or party (whether Papist, Protestant, or some smaller party), in adhering to that party, in being zealous for them, in acquiring and using such parts and gifts, as may make him highly esteemed by others; and in doing such good works as cost him not too dear; and in forbearing such sins as would procure his disgrace and shame, and cost his flesh dearer to commit them, than forbear them; and such other as his flesh can spare: this is his fourth principle. And he is resolved, when trial calleth him to part with God and his conscience, or with the world, that he will rather let go God and conscience, and venture upon the pains hereafter, which he thinks to be uncertain, than to run upon a certain calamity or undoing here: at least, he hath no resolution to the contrary, which will carry him out in a day of trial: this is his fifth principle. And his sixth principle is, That yet he will not torment himself, or blot his name, with confessing himself a temporizing worldling, resolved to turn any way to save himself. And therefore he will be sure to believe nothing to be truth and duty that is dangerous; but will furnish himself with arguments, to prove that it is not the will of God; and that sin is no sin: yea, perhaps, conscience and duty shall be pleaded for his sin: it shall be out of tenderness, and piety, and charity to others, that he will sin; and will charge them to be the sinners, that comply not, and do not wickedly as well as he. He will be one that shall first make a controversy of every sin which his flesh calls necessary, and of every duty which his flesh counts intolerably dear: and then, when it is a controversy, and many reputed wise, and some reputed good, are on his side, he thinks he is on equal terms with the most honest and sincere: he hath got a burrow for his conscience and his credit: he will not believe himself to be an hypocrite, and no one else must think him one, lest they be uncharitable; for then the censure must fall on the whole party; and then it is sufficient to defend his reputation of piety to say, Though we differ in opinion, we must not differ in affection, and must not condemn each other for such differences (a very great truth where rightly applied). But what is it, O hypocrite, that makes thee differ in cases where thy flesh is interested, rather than

in any other? and why wast thou never of that mind till now that thy worldly interest requireth it? and how cometh it to pass, that thou art always on the self-saving opinion? and whence is it that thou consultest with those only that are of the opinion that thou desirest should be true, and either not at all, or partially and slightly, with those that are against it? Wast thou ever conscious to thyself, that thou hast accounted what it might cost thee to be saved, and reckoned on the worst, and resolved in the strength of grace to go through all? Didst thou ever meddle with much of the self-denying part of religion, or any duties that would cost thee dear? May not thy conscience tell thee, that thou never didst believe that thou shouldst suffer much for thy religion; that is, thou hadst a secret purpose to avoid it?

O sirs! take warning from the mouth of Christ, who hath so oft and plainly warned you of this sin and danger! and told you how necessary self-denial, and a suffering disposition is, to all that are his disciples; and that the worldly, fleshly principle, predominant in the hypocrite, is manifest by his self-saving course: he must take up his cross, and follow him in a conformity to his sufferings, that will indeed be his disciple. We must suffer with him, if we will reign with him^f. “He that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it, yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while; for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended. He also that received seed among the thorns, is he that heareth the word, and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful^g.” If thou have not taken heaven for thy part, and art not resolved to let go all that would keep thee from it, I must say to thy conscience, as Christ to one of thy predecessors, “Yet lackest thou one thing^h,” and such a one, as thou wilt find of flat necessity to thy salvation. And it is likely some trying time, even in this life, will detect thine hypocrisy, and make thee “go away sorrowful,” for thy riches’ sake, as he didⁱ. If godliness with contentment seem not sufficient gain to thee, thou wilt make thy gain go instead of godliness; that is, thy gain shall be next thy heart, and have the precedence which godliness

^f Rom. viii. 17. 18.^g Matt. xiii. 20—22.^h Luke xviii. 22.ⁱ 17—33.

should have, and thy gain shall choose thee thy religion, and overrule thy conscience, and sway thy life.

O sirs ! take warning by the apostates, and temporizing hypocrites, that have looked behind them ; and with Demas, for the world forsaken their duty, and are set up by justice as pillars of salt, for your warning and remembrance. And as ever you would make sure work in turning to God, and escape the too late repentance of the hypocrite, see that you go to the root, and resign the world to the will of God,—and reckon what it may cost you to be followers of Christ,—and look not after any portion, but the favour of God, and life eternal,—and see that there be no secret reserve in your hearts for your worldly interest or prosperity,—and think not of halving it between God and the world, nor making your religion compliant with the desires and interest of the flesh. Take God as enough for you ; yea, as all, or else you take him not as your God.

Direct. xviii. ‘ If you would prove true converts, come over to God as your Father and felicity, with desire and delight, and close with Christ, as your only Saviour, with thankfulness and joy ; and set upon the way of godliness with pleasure and alacrity, as your exceeding privilege, and the only way of profit, honour, and content : and do it not as against your wills, as those that had rather do otherwise if they durst, and account the service of God an unsuitable and unpleasant thing.

You are never truly changed, till your hearts be changed : and the heart is not changed, till the will or love be changed. Fear is not the man : but usually is mixed with unwillingness and dislike, and so is contrary to that which is indeed the man. Though fear may do much for you, it will not do enough : it is oft more sensible than love, even in the best, as being more passionate and violent : but yet there is no more acceptableness in all, than there is will or love^k. God sent not soldiers, or inquisitors, or persecutors, to convert the world by working upon their fear, and driving them

^k Passibilis timor est irrationabilis, et ad irrationabilia constitutis, sed cum præcipit qui cum disciplina et recta ratione consistit, cujus proprium est reverentia. Qui enim propter Christum et doctrinam ejus Deum timet, cum reverentia ei subjectus est ; cum ille qui per verbera aliaque tormenta timet Deum, passibilem timorem habere videtur. Didymus Alex. in Pet. I.

upon that which they take to be a mischief to them: but he sent poor preachers, that had no matter of worldly fears or hopes to move their auditors with; but had authority from Christ to offer them eternal life; and who were to convert the world, by proposing to them the best and most desirable condition, and shewing them where is the true felicity; and proving the certainty and excellency of it to them, and working upon their love, desire, and hope. God will not be your God against your wills, while you esteem him as the devil, that is, only terrible and hurtful to you; and take his service for a slavery, and had rather be from him, and serve the world and the flesh, if it were not for fear of being damned. He will be feared as great, and holy, and just; but he will also be loved as good, and holy, and merciful, and every way suited to the felicity and rest of souls. If you take not God to be better than the creature, (and better to you,) and heaven to be better for you than earth, and holiness than sin, you are not converted: but, if you do, then shew it by your willingness, alacrity, and delight. Serve him with gladness and cheerfulness of heart, as one that hath found the way of life, and never had cause of gladness until now. If you see your servant do all his work with groans, and tears, and lamentations, you will not think he is well pleased with his master and his work. Come to God willingly, with your hearts, or you come not to him indeed at all. You must either make him and his service your delight, or at least your desire, as apprehending him most fit to be your delight, so far as you enjoy him.

Direct. XIX. ‘Remember still that conversion is the turning from your carnal selves to God; and therefore that it engageth you in a perpetual opposition to your own corrupt conceits and wills, to mortify and annihilate them, and captivate them wholly to the holy word and will of God.’

Think not that your conversion dispatcheth all that is to be done in order to your salvation. No: it is but the beginning of your work (that is, of your delight and happiness); you are but engaged by it, to that which must be performed throughout all your lives; it entereth you into the right way, not to sit down there, but to go on till you come to the desired end. It entereth you into Christ’s army, that afterwards you may there win the crown of life; and the

great enemy that you engage against, is yourselves. There will still be a law in your members, rebelling against the law that the Holy Ghost hath put into your minds: your own conceits and your own wills are the great rebels against Christ, and enemies of your sanctification. Therefore it must be your resolved, daily work to mortify them, and bring them clean over to the mind and will of God, which is their rule and end. If you feel any conceits arising in you that are contrary to the Scripture, and quarrel with the word of God, suppress them as rebellious, and give them not liberty to cavil with your Maker, and malapertly dispute with your Governor and Judge, but silence them, and force them reverently to submit. If you feel any will in you contrary to your Creator's will, and that there is something which you would have or do, which God is against, and hath forbid you, remember now how great a part of your work it is, to fly for help to the Spirit of grace, and to destroy all such rebellious desires. Think it not enough, that you can bear the denial of those desires; but presently destroy the desires themselves. For if you let alone the desires, they may at last lay hold upon their prey, before you are aware: or if you should be guilty of nothing but the desires themselves, it is no small iniquity; being the corruption of the heart, and the rebellion and adultery of the principal faculty, which should be kept loyal and chaste to God. The crossness of thy will to the will of God, is the sum of all the impiety and evil of the soul; and the subjection and conformity of thy will to his, is the heart of the new creature, and of thy rectitude and sanctification. Favour not, therefore, any self-conceitedness or self-willedness, nor any rebelliousness against the mind and will of God, any more than you would bear with the disjoining of your bones, which will be little for your ease or use, till they are reduced to their proper place.

Direct. xx. Lastly, 'Be sure that you renounce all conceit of self-sufficiency or merit, in any thing you do, and wholly rely on the Lord Jesus Christ, as your Head, and Life, and Saviour, and Intercessor with the Father.'

Remember that "without him ye can do nothing¹." Nor can any thing you do be acceptable to God, any other way than in him, the beloved Son, in whom he is well pleas-

¹ John xv. 5.

ed. As your persons had never been accepted but in him, no more can any of your services. All your repentings, if you had wept out your eyes for sin, would not have satisfied the justice of God, nor procured you pardon and justification, without the satisfaction and merit of Christ. If he had not first taken away the sins of the world, and reconciled them so far to God, as to procure and tender them the pardon and salvation contained in his covenant, there had been no place for your repentance, nor faith, nor prayers, nor endeavours, as to any hope of your salvation. Your believing would not have saved you, nor indeed had any justifying object, if he had not purchased you the promise and gift of pardon and salvation to all believers.

Objection. But, perhaps, you will say, 'That if we had loved God, without a Saviour, we should have been saved; for God cannot hate and damn those that love him.' To which I answer, You could not have loved God as God, without a Saviour: to have loved him as the giver of your worldly prosperity, with a love subordinate to the love of sin and your carnal selves, and to love him as one that you imagine so unholy and unjust, as to give you leave to sin against him, and prefer every vanity before him, this is not to love God, but to love an image of your own fantasy; nor will it at all procure your salvation. But to love him as your God and happiness, with a superlative love, you could never have done without a Saviour. For, 1. Objectively; God being not your reconciled father, but your enemy, engaged in justice to damn you for ever, you could not love him as thus related to you, because he could not seem amiable to you; and therefore the damned hate him as their destroyer, as the thief or murderer hates the judge. 2. And as to the efficiency; your blinded minds, and depraved wills could never have been restored so far to their rectitude, as to have loved God as God, without the teaching of Christ, and the renewing, sanctifying work of his Spirit. And without a Saviour, you could never have expected this gift of the Holy Ghost. So that your supposition itself is groundless.

3. Indeed conversion is your implanting into Christ, and your uniting to him, and marriage with him, that he may be your life, and help, and hope. "He is the way, the truth,

and the life : and no man cometh to the Father, but by him^m.” “God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son : he that hath the Son, hath life ; and he that hath not the Son, hath not lifeⁿ.” “He is the Vine, and ye are the branches : as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the Vine, so neither can ye, except ye abide in him : he that abideth not in Christ, is cast forth as a branch, and withered, to be burned^o.” All your life and help is in him, and from him : without Christ, you cannot believe in the Father, as in one that will shew you any saving mercy, but only as the devils, that believe him just, and tremble at his justice. Without Christ, you cannot love God, nor have any lively apprehensions of his love. Without Christ, you can have no hope of heaven, and therefore no endeavours for it. Without him, you cannot come near to God in prayer, as having no confidence, because no admittance, acceptance, or hope. Without him, how terrible are the thoughts of death, which in him we see as a conquered thing : and when we remember that he was dead, and is now alive, and the Lord of life, and hath the keys of death and hell, with what boldness may we lay down this flesh, and suffer death to undress our souls ! It is only in Christ that we can comfortably think of the world to come ; when we remember that he must be our Judge, and that in our nature, glorified, he is now in the highest, Lord of all ; and that he is “preparing a place for us, and will come again to take us to himself, that where he is, there we may be also^p.” Alas ! without Christ, we know not how to live an hour ; nor can have hope or peace in any thing we have or do ; nor look with comfort either upward or downward, to God, or the creature ; nor think, without terrors of our sins, of God, or of the life to come. Resolve, therefore, that as true converts, you are wholly to live upon Jesus Christ, and to do all that you do by his Spirit and strength ; and to expect all your acceptance with God, upon his account. When other men are reputed philosophers, or wise, for some unsatisfactory knowledge of these transitory things, do you desire to know nothing but a crucified, and glorified Christ : study him, and take him (objectively) for your wisdom. When other men have confidence in the flesh, and in their shew of wisdom, in will-worship, and humility,

^m John xiv. 6.ⁿ 1 John v. 11, 12.^o John xv. 4—6.^p John xiv. 3.

after the commandments and doctrines of men¹, and would establish their own righteousness, do you rejoice in Christ your righteousness; and set continually before your eyes, his doctrine and example, as your rule: look still to Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith, who contemned all the glory of the world, and trampled upon its vanity, and subjected himself to a life of suffering, and made himself of no reputation, but “for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame,” and underwent the contradiction of sinners against himself. Live so, that you may truly say as Paul, “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live: yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me².”

Having given you these directions, I most earnestly beseech you to peruse and practise them, that my labour may not rise up as a witness against you, which I intend for your conversion and salvation. Think on it, whether this be an unreasonable course, or an unpleasant life, or a thing unnecessary? and what is reasonable, necessary and pleasant, if this be not?

And if you meet with any of those distracted sinners, that would deride you from Christ and your salvation, and say, ‘this is the way to make men mad,’ or, ‘this is more ado than needs;’ I will not stand here to manifest their brutishness and wickedness, having largely done it already, in my book called, “A Saint or a Brute,” and “Now or Never,” and in the third part of the “Saints’ Rest:” but only I desire thee, as a full defensative against all the pratings of the enemies of a holy, heavenly life, to take good notice but of these three things.

1. Mark well, the language of the holy Scriptures, and see whether it speak not contrary to these men: and bethink thee whether God or they be wiser, and whether God or they must be thy Judge?

2. Mark, whether these men do not change their minds, and turn their tongues when they come to die? Or think whether they will not change their minds, when death hath sent them into that world where there is none of these deceits? And think whether thou shouldst be moved with that man’s

¹ Col. ii. 20—23.

² Gal. ii. 20.

words, that will shortly change his mind himself, and wish he had never spoke such words^s?

3. Observe well, whether their own profession do not condemn them; and whether the very thing that they hate the godly for, be not that they are serious in practising that which these malignants themselves profess as their religion? And are they not then notorious hypocrites, to profess to believe in God, and yet scorn at those that “diligently seek him? to profess faith in Christ, and hate those that obey him? to profess to believe in the Holy Ghost as the sanctifier, and yet hate and scorn his sanctifying work? To profess to believe the day of judgment and everlasting torment of the ungodly, and yet to deride those that endeavour to escape it? to profess to believe that heaven is prepared for the godly, and yet scorn at those that make it the chief business of their lives to attain it? to profess to take the holy Scriptures for God’s word and law, and yet to scorn those that obey it? to pray after each of the ten commandments, “Lord have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law,” and yet to hate all those that desire and endeavour to keep them? What impudent hypocrisy is joined with this malignity! Mark, whether the greatest diligence of the most godly be not justified by the formal profession of those very men that hate and scorn them? The difference between them is, that the godly profess Christianity in good earnest, and when they say what they believe, they believe as they say: but the ungodly customarily, and for company, take on them to be Christians when they are not, and by their own mouths condemn themselves, and hate and oppose the serious practice of that which they say they do themselves believe^t.

^s As the Athenians, that condemned Socrates to death, and then lamented it, and erected a brazen statue for his memorial.

^t Acosta saith, that he that will be a pastor to the Indians, must not only resist the devil and the flesh, but must resist the custom of men which is grown powerful by time and multitude: and must oppose his breast to receive the darts of the envious and malevolent, who, if they see any thing contrary to their profane fashion, they cry out, a traitor! an hypocrite! an enemy! lib. 4. c. 15. p. 404. It seems among papists and barbarians, the Serpent’s seed do hiss in the same manner against the good among themselves, as they do against us.

PART II.

*The Temptations whereby the Devil hindereth Men's Conversion :
with the proper Remedies against them.*

THE most holy and righteous Governor of the world, hath so restrained satan and all our enemies, and so far given us free-will, that no man can be forced to sin against his will : it is not sin if it be not (positively or privatively) voluntary. All our enemies in hell or earth, cannot make us miserable without ourselves ; nor keep a sinner from true conversion, and salvation, if he do it not himself ; no, nor compel him to one sinful thought, or word, or deed, or omission, but by tempting and enticing him to be willing : all that are graceless, are willfully graceless. None go to hell, but those that choose the way to hell, and would not be persuaded out of it ; none miss of heaven, but those that did set so light by it, as to prefer the world and sin before it, and refused the holy way that leadeth to it. And surely man that naturally loveth himself, would never take so mad a course, if his reason were not laid asleep, and his understanding were not wofully deluded : and this is the business of the tempter, who doth not drag men to sin by violence, but draw and entice them by temptations. I shall therefore take it for the next part of my work, to open these Temptations, and tell you the remedies.

Temptation 1. 'The first endeavour of the tempter is, in general, to keep the sinner asleep in sin : so that he shall be as a dead man, that hath no use of any of his faculties ; that hath eyes and seeth not, and ears but heareth not, and a heart that understandeth not, nor feeleth any thing that concerneth his peace. The light that shineth upon a man asleep, is of no use to him : his work lieth undone : his friends, and wealth, and greatest concernments are all forgotten by him, as if there were no such things or persons in the world : you may say what you will against him, or do what you will against him, and he can do nothing in his own defence. This is the case that the devil most laboureth to keep the world in ; even in so dead a sleep, that their reason, and their wills, their fear, and hope, and all their powers shall be of no

use to them. That when they hear a preacher, or read the Scripture, or good books, or see the holy examples of the godly; yea, when they see the grave, and know where they must shortly lie, and know that their souls must stay here but a little while, yet they shall hear, and see, and know all this, as men asleep, that mind it not, as if it concerned not them at all; never once soberly considering and laying it to heart.'

Direct. 1. For the remedy against this deadly sin, 1. Take heed of sleepy opinions, or doctrines and conceits which tend to the lethargy of security. 2. Sit not still, but be up and doing: stirring tends to shake off drowsiness. 3. Come into the light: live under an awakening minister, and in wakening company, that will not sleep with you, nor easily let you sleep: agree with them to deal faithfully with you, and promise them to take it thankfully. 4. And meditate oft on wakening considerations. Think whether a sleepy soul beseeem one in thy dangerous condition. Canst thou sleep with such a load of sin upon thy soul? Canst thou sleep under the thundering threatenings of God? and the curse of his law; with so many wounds in thy conscience, and ulcers in thy soul? If thy body were sick, or in the case of Job; yea, if thou hadst but an aching tooth, it would not let thee sleep; and is not the guilt of sin, a thing more grievous? If thorns, or toads and adders were in thy bed, they would keep thee waking! and how much more odious and dangerous a thing is sin! If thy body want but meat, or drink, or covering, it will break thy sleep; and is it nothing for thy soul to be destitute of Christ and grace? A condemned man will be easily kept awake: and if thou be unregenerate, thou art already condemned*. Thou sleepest in irons; in the captivity of the devil; among the walking judgments of God; in a life that is still expecting an end; in a boat that is swiftly carried to eternity; just at the entrance of another world; and that world will be hell, if grace awake thee not. Thou art going to see the face of God; to see the world of angels or devils, and to be accompanied with one of them for ever: and is this a place or case to sleep in? Is thy bed so soft? thy dwelling so safe? God standeth over thee, man; and dost thou sleep? Christ is coming, and death, and judgment

* John iii. 18.

coming, and dost thou sleep? Didst thou never read of the foolish virgins, that slept out their time, and knocked and cried in vain when it was too late^b? Thou mightest more wisely sleep on the pinnacle of a steeple in a storm, than have a soul asleep in so dangerous a case as thou art in. The devil is awake, and is rocking thy cradle! How busy is he to keep off ministers, or conscience, or any that would awake thee? None of thy enemies are asleep; and yet wilt thou sleep, in the thickest of thy foes? Is the battle a sleeping time; or thy race a sleeping time, when heaven or hell must be the end? While he can keep thee asleep, the devil can do almost what he list with thee. He knows that thou hast now no use of thy eyes, or understanding, or power to resist him: the most learned doctor in his sleep, is as unlearned, actually, as an idiot, and will dispute no better than an unlearned man. This makes many learned men to be ungodly: they are asleep in sin. The devil could never have made such a drudge of thee, to do his work, against Christ and thy soul, if thou hadst been awake. Thou wouldst never have followed his whistle to the ale-house, the play-house, the gaming-house, and to other sins, if thou hadst been in thy wits, and well awake^c. I cannot believe that thou longest to be damned, or so hatest thyself, as to have done as thou hast done, to have lived a godless, a graceless, a prayerless, and yet a merry, careless life, if thy eyes had been opened, and thou hadst known, and feelingly known, that this was the way to hell. Nature itself will hardly go to hell awake. But it is easy to abuse a man that is asleep. Thou hast reason; but didst thou ever awake it to one hour's serious consideration of thy endless state and present case? O dreadful judgment, to be given over to the spirit of slumber^d! Is it not high time now to awake out of sleep^e? When the light is arisen and shines about thee! When others that care for their souls, are busily at work! When thou hast slept out so much precious time already! Many a mercy, and perhaps some ministers, have been as candles burnt out to light thee while thou hast slept! How oft hast thou been called already! "How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard^f?" Yet thou hast thundering calls and alarms to awake thee. God calls, and

^b Matt. xxv. 5.^c Prov. vii. 23, 24.^d Rom. xi. 8.^e Rom. xiii. 11.^f Prov. vi. 9, 10.

Ministers call! Mercies call, and judgments call! and yet wilt thou not awake? "The voice of the Lord is powerful: full of majesty; breaketh the cedars; shaketh the wilderness:" and yet cannot it awake thee? Thou wilt not sleep about far smaller matters! at meat, or drink, or in common talk, or market. But O! how much greater business hast thou to keep thee awake? Thou hast yet an unholy soul to be renewed; an ungodly life to be reformed; an offended God to be reconciled to; and many thousand sins to be forgiven! Thou hast death and judgment to prepare for; thou hast heaven to win, and hell to escape! Thou hast many a needful truth to learn, and many a holy duty to perform; and yet dost thou think it time to sleep? Paul, that had less need than thou, did watch, and pray, and labour, day and night^s. O that thou knewest how much better it is to be awake! While thou sleepest, thou lovest the benefit of the light, and all the mercies that attend thee: the sun is but as a clod to a man asleep; the world is as no world to him; the beauty of heaven and earth are nothing to him; princes, friends, and all things are forgotten by him! So doth thy sleep in sin make nothing of health, and patience, time, and help, ministers, books, and daily warnings. O what a day hast thou for everlasting, if thou hadst but a heart to use it! What a price hast thou in thine hand^h! Sleep not out thy day, thy harvest time, thy tide time! "They that sleep, sleep in the nightⁱ." "Awake, and Christ will give thee light^k!" "Awake to righteousness, and sin not^l!" O, when thou seest the light of Christ, what a wonder will it possess thee with, at the things which thou now forgettest! What joy will it fill thee with; and with what pity to the sleepy world! But if thou wilt needs sleep on, be it known to thee, sinner, it shall not be long. If thou wilt wake no sooner, death and vengeance will awake thee. Thou wilt wake when thou seest the other world; and seest the things which thou wouldst not believe, and comest before thy dreadful Judge! "Thy damnation slumbereth not^m." There are no sleepy souls in heaven or hell; all are awake there; and the day that hath awakened so many, shall waken thee. Watch, then, if thou love thy

^s Acts xx. 31. ^l Thes. iii. 10.^h Prov. x. 5.ⁱ 1 Thes. v. 7.^k Rom. xiii. 12. Ephes. v. 14.^l 1 Cor. xv. 34.^m 2 Pet. ii. 3.

soul, lest thy Lord come “suddenly and find thee sleeping.”
 “What I say to one, I say to all, Watch^m.”

Tempt. ii. ‘If Satan cannot keep the soul in a sleepy, careless, inconsiderate forgetfulness, he would make the unregenerate soul believe, that there is no such thing as regenerating grace; but that it is, a fancied thing, which no man hath experience of, and he saith, as Nicodemus, “How can these things be?”’ He thinks that natural conscience is enough.’

Direct. ii. But this may be easily refuted by observing, that holiness is but the very health and rectitude of the soul; and is no otherwise supernatural, than as health to him that is born a leper. It is the rectitude of nature, or its disposition to the use and end that it was made for. Though grace be called supernatural, 1. Because it is not born with us: and 2. Corrupted nature is against it: 3. And the end of it is the God of nature, who is above nature: 4. And the revelation and other means are supernatural (as Christ’s incarnation, resurrection, &c.): yet both nature, and Scripture, and experience tell you, that man is made for another life, and for such works which he is utterly unfit for, till grace have changed and renewed him, as it doth by many before your eyes^o.

Tempt. iii. ‘But, saith the tempter, if supernatural grace be necessary, yet it may be born in you. Infants have no sin; Christ saith, “Of such is the kingdom of God: Abraham is your Father; yea, God^p.” You are born of Christian parents.’

Direct. iii. See the full proof of original sin in all infants, in my “Treatise of the Divine Life,” Part I. Chap. xi. xii. Grace may indeed be put betimes into nature, but comes not by nature^q. “Except you be born again, you cannot enter into the kingdom of God.^r” “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away: behold, all things are become new^s.” But how vain is it for him to boast that he was born holy, who finds himself at the present unholy. Shew that you have a holy, heavenly heart and life, and then you are happy, whenever it was wrought.

^m Mark xiii. 34—37.

ⁿ John iii. 4.

^o See 2 Cor. v. 17. Gal. vi. 15. iv. 19. John iii. 3, 5, 6. Matt. xviii. 3. 1 Pet. i. 23.

^p John viii. 39, 41.

^q Rom. viii. 9, 16. ix. 8. Eph. ii. 3.

^r John iii. 3, 5.

^s 2 Cor. 5. 17.

Tempt. iv. 'But, saith the tempter, baptism is the laver of regeneration: you are baptized, and therefore you are regenerated. The ancients taught that all sins were washed away in baptism, and grace conferred.'

Direct. iv. *Answ.* The ancients by baptism, meant the internal and external acts conjunct: the soul's delivering up itself to God in the covenant, and sealing it by baptism^a: and so it includeth conversion, and true repentance, and faith: and all that are thus baptized are pardoned, justified, and holy. But they that have only sacramental regeneration, or the external ordinance, are not for that in a state of life; for Christ expressly saith, that "except you are born of the Spirit" as well as "water, you cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven". And Peter told Simon Magus, after he was baptized, that he was "yet in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity". It is not the "putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience". Christ cleanseth his church "by the washing of water by the word". But if you had been cleansed in baptism, if at present you are unclean, and unholy, can you be saved so?

Tempt. v. 'When this faileth, the tempter would persuade them, that godliness is nothing but a matter of mere opinion or belief: to believe all the articles of the faith, and to be no papist nor heretic, but of true religion, and to be confident of God's mercy through Christ: for "he that believeth shall be saved".'

Direct. v. To this you must answer, that it will not save a man, that his religion is true, unless he be true to it! Read James ii. against such a dead faith. Saving faith is the hearty entertainment of Christ, as our Lord and Saviour, and the delivering up the soul to him to be sanctified and ruled, as well as pardoned. "Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth. He that knoweth his master's will and doth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes^b." It is sad that men should think to be saved by that which will condemn them! by being of a right opinion, and a wrong conversation; by believing their duty, instead of doing it; and then presuming that Christ forgiveth them, and that their state is good. Opinion and presumption are not faith.

^a Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.^u John iii. 5, 6.^x Acts viii. 13.^y 1 Pet. iii. 21.^z Eph. v. 26.^a Mark xvi. 16.^b Luke xii. 47.

Tempt. vi. ‘But, saith the tempter, holiness is the excellency of holy persons; but vulgar, unlearned people may be saved, without such high matters, which are above them.’

Direct. vi. But God telleth you, that “without holiness none shall see him^c.” The unlearned may be saved; but the ungodly cannot^d. Holiness is to the soul, as life to the body: he that hath it not, is dead; though all have not the same degree of health: sin is sin, and hated of God in learned and unlearned. All men have souls that need regenerating at first: and as all bodies that live, must live on the earth, by the air, and food, &c., so all souls that live, do live upon the same God, and Christ, and heaven, by the same Word and Spirit; and all this may be had by the unlearned.

Tempt. vii. ‘But, saith the tempter, God is not so unmerciful as to damn all that are not holy: this is but talk to keep men in awe; and not to be believed.’

Direct. vii. But if God’s threatenings be necessary to keep men in awe, then are they necessary to be executed. For God needs not awe men by a lie. He best knows to whom he will be merciful, and how far! Did you never read, Isa. xxvii. 11. “It is a people of no understanding: therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them, will shew them no favour.” And Psal. lix. 5. “Be not merciful to any wicked transgressors.” Is he not just, as well as merciful^e? Do you not see that men are sick, and pained, and die, for all that God is merciful? And do not merciful judges condemn malefactors? Are not angels made devils by sin, for all that God is merciful? The devil knoweth this to his sorrow. “And if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell,” will he be unjust for you?

Tempt. viii. ‘But Christ died for all: and God will not punish him and you both, for the same fault.’

Direct. viii. Christ died so far for all that have the Gospel, as to procure and seal them a free and general pardon of all their sins, if they will repent, and take him for their Saviour, and so to bring salvation to their choice. But will this save the ungodly, obstinate refusers? Christ died to sanctify, as well as to forgive^f, and to “purify to himself a

^c Heb. xii. 14.^d Psal. i. 6.^e Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7.^f Eph. v. 27.

peculiar people, zealous of good works^s,” and “to destroy the works of the devil^h,” and to bring all men under his dominion and governmentⁱ. “If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, the same is none of his^k.”

Tempt. ix. ‘No man can be certain of his salvation; but all must hope well: and to raise doubts in men’s hearts, whether they shall be saved or no, will not help them; but puzzle them, and cast them into despair.’

Direct. ix. But is there so little difference between a child of God, and of the devil, and between the way to heaven, and the way to hell, that they cannot be known asunder? Hath not Christ taught us plainly how to know them^l? and bid us “give diligence to make our calling and election sure^m?” If all men must hope that they shall be saved, then most must hope for that which they shall never have: but it is no hope of God’s making, which deceiveth men. Should so great a matter as our everlasting joy, or misery, be cast out of our care, and ventured so regardlessly in the dark, when it is it that we have life, and time, and all for, to make it sure? And what hurt can it do you, to find out the truth of your own condition? If you are indeed unregenerate, and unholy, discover it now in time, and you have time to be recovered. You must despair of being saved, without conversion; but that preventeth absolute, final despair. Whereas, if you find not out your case till time is past, then hope is past; and the devil hath you in endless desperation, where he would.

Tempt. x. ‘If this prevail not, the devil will seek to carry it by noise instead of reason; and will seek to keep you in jovial, merry, voluptuous company, that shall plead by pots, and plays, and pleasures; and shall daily make a jest of godliness, and speak of the godly with scorn, as a company of fanatic hypocrites.’

Direct. x. But consider, that this is but the rage of fools, that speak of what they never understood. Did they ever try the way they speak against? Are they to be believed before God himself? Will they not eat their words, at last, themselves? Will their merry lives last always? Do they die as merrily as they live? and bring off themselves as well as

^s Tit. ii. 14.

^h 1 John iii. 8.

ⁱ Rom. xiv. 9. Luke xix. 27.

^k Rom. viii. 9. ^l Psal. i. & xv. ¹ John iii. ^m 2 Pet. i. 10.

they promised to bring off youⁿ? He that will be cheated of his salvation, and forsake his God for the ranting scorns of a distracted sinner, is worthy to be damned.

Tempt. xi. 'Next, he telleth them, that a godly life is so hard and tedious, that if they should begin, they should never endure to hold on; and therefore it is in vain to try it.'

Direct. xi. But this pretence is compounded of wickedness, and madness. What, but a wicked heart, can make it so hard a thing to live in the love of God, and holiness, and in the hope and seeking of eternal life? Why should not this be a sweeter and pleasanter life, than drinking, and roaring, and gaming, and fooling away time in vain; or than the enjoying of all the delights of the flesh? There is nothing but a sick, distempered heart against it, that nauseateth that which in itself is most delightful. When grace hath changed your hearts, it will be easy. Do you not see that others can hold on in it, and would not be as they were, for all the world? And why may not you? God will help you: it is the office of Christ, and the Spirit to help you: your encouragements are innumerable. The hardness is most at first: the longer it is the easier. But what if it were hard? Is it not necessary? Is hell easier, and to be preferred before it? And will not heaven pay for all your cost and labour? Will you sit down in desperation, and resolve to let your salvation go, upon such silly bug-bear words as these?

Tempt. xii. 'Next, the devil's endeavour will be, to find them so much employment with worldly cares, or hopes, or business, that they shall find no leisure to be serious about the saving of their souls.'

Direct. xii. But this is a snare, though frequently prevalent, yet so irrational, and against so many warnings and witnesses, even of all men in the world, either first or last, at conversion, or at death, that he, who after all this will neglect his God, and his salvation, because he hath worldly things to mind, is worthy to be turned over to his choice, and have no better help or portion in the hour of his necessity and distress. Of this sin I have spoken afterward, Chap. iv. Part 6.

Tempt. xiii. 'Lest the soul should be converted, the devil will do all that he can, to keep you from the acquaint-

ⁿ See Prov. xiii. 20. xxviii. 7. Eph. v. 7. 11.

ance and company of those, whose holiness, and instructions might convince, and strengthen you; and especially from a lively, convincing minister; and to cast you under some dead-hearted minister and society.'

Direct. XIII. Therefore, if it be possible, though it be to your loss or inconvenience in the world, live under a searching, heavenly teacher; and in the company of them that are resolved for heaven. It is a dead heart indeed, that feeleth not the need of such assistance, and is not the better for it when it has it. If ever you be fair for heaven, and like to be converted, it will be among such helps as these.

Tempt. XIV. 'But one of the strongest temptations of satan is, by making their sin exceeding pleasant to them, for the gain, or honour, or fleshly satisfaction; and so increasing the violence of their sensual appetite and lust, and making them so much in love with their sin, that they cannot leave it. Like the thirst of a man in a burning fever, which makes him cry for cold drink, though it would kill him: the fury of the appetite conquering reason. So we see many drunkards, fornicators, worldlings, that are so deeply in love with their sin, that come on it what will, they will have it, though they have hell with it.'

Direct. XIV. Against this temptation, I desire you to read what I have said after, Chap. iv. Part 7. Chap. iii.

Direct. 6. 8. O that poor sinners knew what it is that they so much love! Is the pleasing of the flesh so sweet a thing to you? and are you so indifferent to God, and holy things? Are these less amiable? Do you foresee what both will be at last? Will your sin seem better than Christ, and grace, and heaven, when you are dying? O be not so in love with damning folly, and the pleasure of a beast, as for it to despise the heavenly wisdom and delights!

Tempt. XV. 'Another great temptation is, the prosperity of the wicked in this life; and the reproach and suffering which usually falls upon the godly: if God did strike every notorious sinner dead in the place, as soon as he had sinned, or struck him blind, or dumb, or lame, or inflicted presently some such judgment, then many would fear him, and forbear their sin; but when we see no men prosper so much as the most ungodly, and that they are the persecutors of the holy

seed, and that sentence against an evil work is not speedily executed, then are their hearts set in them to do evil^o.

Direct. xv. But, alas! how short is the prosperity of the wicked! Read Psal. lxxiii. xxxvii. Delay is no forgiveness: they stay but till the assize: and will that tempt you to do as they? How unthankfully do sinners deal with God! If he should kill you, and plague you, that would not please you; and yet if he forbear you, you are emboldened by it in your sin. Thus his patience is turned against him; but the stroke will be the heavier when it falls. Dost thou think those men will always flourish? Will they always domineer and revel? Will they always dwell in the houses where they now dwell, and possess those lands, and be honoured and served as now they are? O how quickly, and how dreadfully will the case be changed with them! O could you but foresee now, what faces they will have, and what heavy hearts, and with what bitter exclamations they will at last cry out against themselves, for all their folly, and wish that they had never been deceived by prosperity; but rather had the portion of a Lazarus! If you saw how they are but fatted for the slaughter, and in what a dolorous misery their wealth, and sport, and honours will leave them, you would lament their case, and think so great a destruction were soon enough, and not desire to be partners in their lot!

Tempt. xvi. 'Another temptation is, their own prosperity. They think God, when he prospereth them, is not so angry with them as preachers tell them: and it is a very hard thing, in health and prosperity, to lay to heart either sin or threatenings, and to have such serious, lively thoughts of the life to come, as men that are wakened by adversity have: and especially men that are familiar with death. Prosperity is the greatest temptation to security, and delaying repentance, and putting off preparation for eternity. Overcome prosperity, and you overcome your greatest snare.'

Direct. xvi. Go into the sanctuary; yea, go into the church-yard, and see the end: and judge by those skulls, and bones, and dust, if you cannot judge by the forewarnings of God, what prosperity is^p! Judge by the experience of all

^o Eccles. viii. 11.

^p See my Sermon on Prov. i. 52. in the end of "The Vain Religion of the Formal Hypocrite."

the world ! Doth it not leave them all in sorrow at last ? Wo to the man that hath his portion in this life ! O miserable health, and wealth, and honour, which procureth the death, and shame, and utter destruction of the soul ! Was not he in as prosperous a case as you, that quickly cried out in vain, for a drop of water to cool his tongue^a ? There is none of you so senseless as not to know that you must die. And must you die ? Must you certainly die ? and shall that day be no better prepared for ? Shall present prosperity make you forget it, and live as if you must live here for ever ? Do you make so great difference between that which is, and that which will be, as to make as great a matter of it as others, when it comes ; and to make no more of it when it is but coming ? O man, what is an inch of hasty time ! How quickly is it gone ! Thou art going hence apace, and almost gone ! Doth God give thee the mercy of a few days or years of health, to make all thy preparations in for eternity, and doth his mercy turn to thy deceit, and dost thou turn it so much contrary to the ends for which it was given thee ? Wilt thou surfeit on mercy, and destroy thy soul with it ? Sense feeleth and perceiveth what now is, but thou hast reason to foresee what will be ? Wilt thou play in harvest, and forget the winter !

Tempt. xvii. ‘ Another great temptation to hinder conversion, is the example and counsel of the great ones that are ungodly ; when landlords, and men in power, are sensual, and enemies to a holy life, and speak reproachfully of it, their inferiors, by the reverence which they bear to worldly wealth and greatness, are easily drawn to say as they. Also, when men reputed learned and wise, are of another mind : and especially when subtle enemies speak that reproach against it, which they cannot answer.’

Direct. xvii. To this I spake in the end of the first part of this chapter. No man is so great and wise as God. See whether he say as they do in his Word ! The greatest that provoke him can no more save themselves from his vengeance, than the poorest beggars ! What work made he with a Pharaoh ! and got himself a name by his hard-heartedness and impenitency ! He can send worms to eat an ar-

^a Luke xvi.

rogant Herod, when the people cry him up as a god ! Where are now the Cæsars and Alexanders of the world ? The rulers and pharisees believed not in Christ^r. Wilt thou not therefore believe in him ? The governor of the country condemned him to die ; and wilt thou condemn him ? “ The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us^s. ” Wilt thou therefore join in the conspiracy ? When “ he that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision. ” — “ He will break them with an iron rod, and dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel, ” unless they “ be wise, and kiss the Son, and serve the Lord with fear, before his wrath be kindled, and they perish^t. ” If thy landlord, or great ones, shall be thy god, and be honoured and obeyed before God and against him, trust to them, and call on them in the hour of thy distress, and take such a salvation as they can give thee. Teach not God what choice to make, and whom to reveal his mysteries to : he chooseth not always the learned scribe, nor the mighty man ; Christ himself saith, “ I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to babes : even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight^u ! ” If this reason satisfy you not, follow them, and speed as they. If they are greater and wiser than God, let them be your gods^x. “ You see your calling, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called : but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise ; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty ; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are^y. ” It is another kind of greatness, honour, and wisdom, which God bestoweth on the poorest saints, than the world can give. Worldlings will shortly be weary of their portion : in your baptism you renounced the world, with its pomps and vanity ; and now do you deify, what you then defied ?

Tempt. xviii. ‘ Another temptation is, to draw on the

^r John vii. 48. ^s Psal. ii. 2, 3. ^t Psal. ii. 4. 9. 10—12. ^u Matt. xi. 25. 26.

^x Read Mr. Bolton’s Assize Sermon, on 1 Cor. i. 26—28. ^y 1 Cor. i. 26.

winner into such a custom in sin, and long neglect of the means of his recovery, till his heart is utterly hardened.'

Direct. xviii. Against this, read after, Chap. iv. part 2. against hardness of heart.

Tempt. xix. 'Another temptation is, to delay repentance, and purpose to do it hereafter.'

Direct. xix. Of this I entreat you to read the many reasons which I have given, to shame and waken delayers, in my book of "Directions for a Sound Conversion."

Tempt. xx. 'The worst of all is, to tempt them to flat unbelief of Scripture, and the life to come.'

Direct. xx. Against this, read here, Chap. iii. *Direct.* 1. Chap. iv. Part 1. and my "Treatise against Infidelity."

Tempt. xxi. 'If they will needs look after grace, he will do all he can to deceive them with counterfeits, and make them take a seeming, half conversion for a saving change.'

Direct. xxi. Of this read my "Directions for Sound Conversion," and the "Formal Hypocrite," and "Saints' Rest," Part iii. Chap. 10.

Tempt. xxii. 'If he cannot make them flat infidels, he will tempt them to question and contradict the sense of all those texts of Scripture which are used to convince them, and all those doctrines which grate most upon their galled consciences; as, of the necessity of regeneration,—the fewness of them that are saved,—the difficulty of salvation,—the torments of hell,—the necessity of mortification,—and the sinfulness of all particular sins: they will hearken what cavillers can say for any sin, and against any part of godliness; and with this they wilfully delude themselves.'

Direct. xxii. But if men are resolved to join with the devil, and shut their eyes, and cavil against all that God speaketh to them to prevent their misery, and know not, because they will not know; what remedy is left, or who can save men against their wills? "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil. He that doth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved²." In Scripture, "some things are hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned

² John iii. 19. 20.

and unstable, wrest to their own destruction*.” Of particulars read the end of my “Treatise of Conversion.”

Tempt. xxiii. ‘Yea, satan will do his worst to make them heretics, and teach them some doctrine of licentiousness suitable to their lusts: it is hard being wicked still against conscience in the open light: this is kicking against the pricks: too smarting work to be easily borne. Therefore the devil will make them a religion which shall please them, and do their sins no harm: either a religion made up of loose opinions, like the Familists, Ranters, Libertines, and Antinomians (and the Jesuits too much); or else made up of trifling formalities, and a great deal of bodily exercise, and stage-actings, and compliment, as much of the Popish devotion is: and a little will draw a carnal heart to believe a carnal doctrine: it is easier to get such a new religion, than a new heart. And then, the devil tells them that now they are in the right way, and therefore they shall be saved. A great part of the world think their case is good, because they are of such a sect or party, and of that, which they are told by their leaders, is the true church and way.’

Direct. xxiii. But remember, that whatever law you make to yourselves, God will judge you by his own law. Falsifying the king’s coin, is no good way to pay a debt, but an addition of treason to your former misery. It is a new and holy heart and life, and not a new creed, or a new church or sect, that is necessary to your salvation. It will never save you, to be in the soundest church on earth, if you be unsound in it yourselves; and are but the dust in the temple that must be swept out: much less will it save you, to make yourselves a rule, because God’s rule doth seem too strict.

Tempt. xxiv. ‘Another way of the tempter is, to draw men to take up with mere convictions, instead of true conversion: when they have but learned that it is necessary to salvation, to be regenerate, and have the Spirit of Christ, they are as quiet, as if this were indeed to be regenerate, and to have the Spirit. As some think they have attained to perfection, when they have but received the opinion that perfection may here be had; so abundance think they have sanctification and forgiveness, because they now see that

* 2 Pet. iii. 16.

they must be had, and without sanctification, there is no salvation: and thus the knowledge of all grace and duty, shall go with them for the grace and duty itself; and their judgment of the thing, instead of the possession of it: and instead of having grace, they force themselves to believe that they have it.'

-E: Direct. xxiv. But remember, God will not be mocked: he knoweth a convinced head, from a holy heart. To think you are rich, will not make you rich; to believe that you are well, or to know the remedy, is not enough to make you well. ; You may dream that you eat, and yet awake hungry. All the land and money which you see, is not therefore your own. To know that you should be holy, maketh your unholiness to have no excuse. Ahab did not escape by believing that he should return in peace: self-flattery in so great and weighty a case, is the greatest folly. "If you know these things, happy are ye if ye do them^b."

-E: Tempt. xxv. 'Another great temptation is, by hiding from men the intrinsic evil and odiousness of sin. What harm, saith the drunkard, and adulterer, and voluptuous sensualist, is there in all this, that preachers make so great ado against? What hurt is this, to God or man? that they would make us believe that we must be damned for it; and that Christ died for it; and that the Holy Ghost must mortify it? "Wherefore," say the Jews^c, "hath God pronounced all this great evil against us? or what is our iniquity? or what is our sin, that we have committed?"—He that knoweth not God, knoweth not what sin against God is: especially when the love of it, and delight in it, blindeth them.'

-E: Direct. xxv. Against this, I entreat you to ponder on those forty intrinsical evils in sin, which I have after named, Chap. iii. Direct. 8. and the aggravations. If the devil can but once persuade you, that sin is harmless, all faith, all religion, all honesty, and your souls and all, are gone. For then, all God's laws and government must be fictions: then, there is no work for Christ as a Saviour, or the Spirit as a Sanctifier, to do; then, all ordinances and means are troublesome vanities; and godliness and obedience deserve to be banished from the earth, as unnecessary troublers of mankind; then, may this poison be safely taken, and made

^b John xiii. 17.

^c Jer. xvi. 10.

your food. But O how mad a conceit is this! How quickly will God make the proudest know, what harm it was to refuse the government of his Maker, and set up the government of his beastly appetite, and misguided will! and that sin is bad, if hell be bad.

Tempt. xxvi. 'The devil also tempteth them to think, that though they sin, yet their good works are a compensation for their bad; and therefore they pray, and do some acts of Pharisaical devotion, to make God amends for what they do amiss.'

Direct. xxvi. Against this consider, that if you had never so many good works, they are all but your duty, and make no satisfaction for your sin. But what good works can you do, that shall save a wicked soul? and that God will accept without your hearts? Your hearts must be first cleansed, and yourselves devoted and sanctified to God: for an evil tree will bring forth evil fruit: first make the tree good, and the fruit will be good! It is the love of God, and the hatred of sin, and a holy and heavenly life which are the good works that God chiefly calleth for; and faith, and repentance, and conversion, in order to these. And will God take your lip-labour, or the leaving of your flesh by way of alms, while the world and fleshly pleasure have your hearts? Indeed, you do no work that is truly good! The matter may be good: but you poison it with bad principles and ends: "The carnal mind is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be; but is enmity against God^d."

Tempt. xxvii. 'Some are tempted to think, that God will not condemn them because they are poor and afflicted in this life, and have their sufferings here: and that he that condemneth the rich, for not shewing mercy to the poor, will himself shew them mercy.'

Direct. xxvii. Hath he not shewed you mercy? and is it not mercy which you vilify and refuse? even Christ, and his Spirit, and holy communion with God? or must God shew you the mercy of glory, without the mercy of grace? which is a contradiction. Strange! that the same men that will not be entreated to accept of mercy, nor let it save them, are yet saying, that God will be merciful and save them.

^d Rom. viii. 7.

And for your poverty and suffering, is it not against your will? you cannot deny it: and will God save any man for that which is against his will? You would have riches, and honour, and pleasure, and your good things in this life as well as others, if you could tell how: you love the world as well as others, if you could get more of it. And to be carnal and worldly for so poor a pittance, and to love the world when you suffer in it, doth make you more inexcusable than the rich. The devils have suffered more than you, and so have many thousand souls in hell; and yet they shall be saved never the more. If you are poor in the world, but rich in faith and holiness, then you may well expect salvation^e. But if your sufferings make you no more holy, they do but aggravate your sin.

Tempt. xxviii. 'Also the devil blindeth sinners, by keeping them ignorant of the nature and power of holiness of heart and life! They know it not by any experience: and he will not let them see it and judge of it in the Scripture, where it is to be seen without any mixed contraries; but he points them only to professors of holiness, and commonly to the weakest and the worst of them, and to that which is worst in them, and sheweth them the miscarriages of hypocrites, and the falls of the weaker sort of Christians, and then tells them, this is their godliness and religion; they are all alike.'

Direct. xxviii. But it is easy to see, how these men deceive and condemn themselves. This is as if you should plead that a beast is wiser than a man, because some men are drunk, and some are passionate, and some are mad. Drunkenness and passions, which are the disturbers of reason, are no disgrace to reason, but to themselves: nor were they a disgrace themselves, if reason which they hinder were not honourable. So no man's sins are a disgrace to holiness, which condemneth them: nor were they bad themselves, if holiness were not good, which they oppose. It is no disgrace to the day-light or sun, that there is night and darkness: nor were darkness bad, if light were not good. Will you refuse health, because some men are sick? nay, will you rather choose to be dead, because the living have infirmities? The devil's reasoning is more foolish than this!

^e James ii. 5.

Holiness is of absolute necessity to salvation. If many that do more than you, are as bad as you imagine, what a case then are you in, that have not near so much as they? If they that make it their greatest care to please God, and be saved, are as very hypocrites as the devil would persuade you, what a hopeless case then are you in, that come far short of them? If so, you must do more than they, and not less, if you will be saved: or else out of your own mouths will you be condemned.

Tempt. xxix. 'Another way of the tempter is, by drawing them desperately to venture their souls; come on them what will, they will put it to the venture, rather than live so strict a life.'

Direct. xxix. But, O man, consider what thou dost, and who will have the loss of it! and how quickly it may be too late to recall thy adventure! What should put thee on so mad a resolution? Is sin so good?—is hell so easy?—is thy soul so contemptible?—is heaven such a trifle?—is God so hard a master?—is his work so grievous, and his way so bad?—doth he require any thing unreasonable of you?—hath God set you such a grievous task, that it is better to venture on damnation than perform it? You cannot believe this, if you believe him to be God. Come near, and think more deliberately on it, and you will find you might better run from your food, your friend, your life, than from your God, and from a holy life, when you run but into sin and hell.

Tempt. xxx. 'Another great temptation is, in making them believe that their sins are but such common infirmities as the best have; they cannot deny but they have their faults; but are not all men sinners? They hope they are not reigning, unpardoned sins.'

Direct. xxx. But, O how great a difference is between a converted and an unconverted sinner!—between the failings of a child and the contempt of a rebel!—between a sinner that hath no gross or mortal sin, and hateth, bewail-eth, and striveth against his infirmities;—and a sinner that loveth his sin, and is loath to leave it, and maketh light of it, and loveth not a holy life. God will one day shew you a difference between these two, when you see that there are sinners that are justified and saved, and sinners that are condemned.

Temptations to take Mortal Sins for Infirmities.

Tempt. i. ' But here are many subordinate temptations, by which satan persuades them that their sins are but infirmities: one is, because their sin is but in the heart, and appeareth not in outward deeds: and they take *restraint* for sanctification.'

Direct. i. Alas! man, the life and reign of sin is in the heart: that is its garrison and throne: the life of sin lieth in the prevalence of your lusts within, against the power of reason and will. All outward sins are but acts of obedience to the reigning sin within; and a gathering tribute for this; which is the king. For this it is that they make provision^f. On this all is consumed^g. Original sin may be reigning sin (as a king may be born a king): sin certainly reigneth, until the soul be converted and born again.

Tempt. ii. ' The devil tells them it is but an infirmity, because it is no open, gross, disgraceful sin: it is hard to believe that they are in danger of hell, for sins which are accounted small.'

Direct. ii. But do you think it is no mortal, heinous sin, to be void of the love of God and holiness?—to love the flesh and the world above him?—to set more by earth than heaven, and do more for it? However they shew themselves, these are the great and mortal sins. Sin is not less dangerous for lying secret in the heart. The root and heart are usually unseen. Some kings (as in China, Persia, &c.) keep out of sight for the honour of their majesty. Kings are the spring of government; but actions of state are executed by officers. When you see a man go, or work, you know that it is something within which is the cause of all. If sin appeared without, as it is within, it would lose much of its power and majesty. Then ministers, and friends, and every good man would cast a stone at it; but its secresy is its peace. The devil himself prevaieth by keeping out of sight. If he were seen, he would be less obeyed. So it is with the reigning sins of the heart. Pride and covetousness may be reigning sins, though they appear not in any notorious, disgraceful course of life. David's hiding his sin, or Rachel her idol, made them not the better. It is a mercy to some men, that God permitteth them to fall into some open, scandalous sin,

^f Rom. xiii. 14.^g James iv. 3.

which may tend to humble them, who would not have been humbled nor convinced by heart-sins alone^b. An oven is hottest when it is stopped.

Tempt. iii. 'Satan tells them, they are not unpardoned, reigning sins, because they are common in the world. If all that are as bad as I, must be condemned, say they, God help a great number.'

Direct. iii. But know you not that reigning sin is much more common than saving holiness? and that the gate is wide, and the way is broad that leadeth to destruction, and many go in at it? Salvation is as rare as holiness; and damnation as common as reigning sin, where it is not cured. This sign therefore makes against you.

Tempt. iv. 'But, saith the tempter, they are such sins as you see good men commit: you play at the same games as they: you do but what you see them do; and they are pardoned.'

Direct. iv. You must judge the man by his works, and not the works by the man. And there is more to be looked at, than the bare matter of an act. A good man and a bad may play at the same game, but not with the same end, nor with the same love to sport, nor so frequently and long to the loss of time. Many drops may wear a stone: many stripes with small twigs may draw blood. Many mean men in a senate have been as great as kings: you may have many of these little sins set all together, which plainly make up a carnal life. The power of a sin is more considerable than the outward shew. A poor man, if he be in the place of a magistrate, may be a ruler. And a sin materially small, and such as better men commit, may be a sin in power and rule with you, and concur with others which are greater.

Tempt. v. 'But, saith the tempter, they are but sins of omission, and such as are not reigning sins.'

Direct. v. Sins of omission are always accompanied with some positive, sensual affection to the creature, which diverteth the soul, and causeth the omission: and so omission is no small part of the reigning sin. The not using of reason and the will for God, and for the mastering of sensuality, is much of the state of ungodliness in man. Denying God the heart and life is no small sin. God made you to

^b See Jer. iv. 14. Hosea vii. 6, 7.

do good, and not only to do no harm : else a stone or corpse were as good a Christian as you, for they do less harm than you. If sin have a negative voice in your religion, whether God shall be worshipped and obeyed or not, it is your king : it may shew its power as well by commanding you not to pray, and not to consider, and not to read, as in commanding you to be drunk or swear. The wicked are described by omissions :—Such as “ will not seek after God : God is not in all his thoughts¹ ; ”—such as “ know not God, and call not on his name² ; ”—that have “ no truth, or mercy, or knowledge of God³ ; ”—that “ feed not, clothe not, visit not ” Christ in his members^m ;—that hide their talentsⁿ. Indeed, if God have not your hearts the creature hath it ; and so it is omission and commission that go together in your reigning sin.

Tempt. vi. ‘ But, saith the tempter, they are but sins of ignorance, and therefore they are not reigning sins : at least you are not certain that they are sins.

Direct. vi. And, indeed, do you not know that it is a sin to love the world better than God ? and fleshly pleasure better than God’s service ? and riches better than grace and holiness ? and to do more for the body than for the soul, and for earth than for heaven ? Are you uncertain whether these are sins ? And do you not feel that they are your sins ? You cannot pretend ignorance for these. But what causeth your ignorance ? Is it because you would feign know, and cannot ? Do you read, and hear, and study, and inquire, and pray for knowledge, and yet cannot know ? Or is it not because you would not know, or think it not worth the pain to get it ; or because you love your sin ? And will such wilful ignorance as this excuse you ? No ; it doth make your sin the greater. It sheweth the greater dominion of sin, when it can use thee as the Philistines did Samson, put out thine eyes, and make a drudge of thee ; and conquer thy reason, and make thee believe that evil is good and good is evil. Now it hath mastered the principal fortress of thy soul, when thine understanding is mastered by it. He is reconciled indeed to his enemy, who taketh him to be a friend. Do you not know, that God should have your heart, and heaven should have your chiefest care and dili-

¹ Psal. x. 4.² Jer. x. 25.³ Hos. iv. 1.^m Matt. xxv.ⁿ Matt. xxv.

gence ; and that you should make the Word of God your rule, and your delight, and meditation day and night ? If you know not these things, it is because you would not know them : and it is a miserable case to be given up to a blinded mind ! Take heed, lest at last you commit the horridest sins, and do not know them to be sins. For such there are that mock at godliness, and persecute Christians and Ministers of Christ, and know not that they do ill ; but think they do God service°. If a man will make himself drunk, and then kill, and steal, and abuse his neighbours, and say, I knew not that I did ill, it shall not excuse him. This is your case. You are drunken with the love of fleshly pleasure and worldly things, and these carry you so away, that you have neither heart nor time to study the Scriptures, and hear, and think what God saith to you, and then say that you did not know.

Tempt. vii. ‘ But, saith the tempter, it cannot be a mortal, reigning sin, because it is not committed with the whole heart, nor without some struggling and resistance : dost thou not feel the Spirit striving against the flesh ? and so it is with the regenerate^p. The good which thou dost not do, thou wouldst do ; and the evil which thou dost, thou wouldst not do : so then it is no more thou that dost it, but sin that dwelleth in thee. In a sensual, unregenerate person there is but one party, there is nothing but flesh ; but thou feelest the combat between the flesh and the Spirit within thee.’

Direct. vii. This is a snare so subtle and dangerous, that you have need of eyes in your head to escape it. Understand, therefore, 1. That as to the two texts of Scripture, much abused by the tempter, they speak not at all of mortal, reigning sin, but of the unwilling infirmities of such as had subdued all such sin, and walked not after the flesh but after the Spirit ; and whose wills were habitually bent to good, and fain would have been perfect, and not have been guilty of an idle thought or word, or of any imperfection in their holiest service, but lived up to all that the law requireth : but this they could not do, because the flesh did cast many stops before the will in the performance. But this is nothing to the case of one that liveth in gross sin and

° John xvi. 2.

^p Gal. v. 17. Rom. vii. 20—23.

an ungodly life, and hath strivings and convictions, and ineffectual wishes to be better, and to turn, but never doth it. This is but sinning against conscience, and resisting the Spirit that would convert you ; and it maketh you worthy of many stripes, as being rebellious against the importunities of grace. Sin may be resisted, where it is never conquered : it may reign nevertheless for some contradiction. Every one that resisteth the king doth not depose him from his throne. It is a dangerous deceit to think that every good desire that contradicteth sin doth conquer it, and is a sign of saving grace. It must be a desire after a state of saving grace. It must be a desire after a state of godliness, and an effectual desire too. There are degrees of power : some may have a less and limited power, and yet be rulers. As the evil spirits that possessed men's bodies were a legion in one, and but one in others, yet both were possessed ; so is it here. Grace is not without resistance in a holy soul : there are some remnants of corruption in the will itself, resisting the good ; and yet it followeth not, that grace doth not rule : so it is in the sin of the unregenerate. No man in this life is so good as he will be in heaven, or so bad as he will be in hell : therefore none is void of all moral good. And the least good will resist evil in its degree, as light doth darkness. As in these cases :

1. There is in the unregenerate, a remnant of natural knowledge and conscience : some discoveries of God and his will there are in his works : God hath not left himself without witness¹. This light and law of nature governed the heathens : and this, in its measure, resisteth sin and assisteth the conscience.

2. When supernatural, extrinsic revelation in the Scripture is added to the light and law of nature, and the ungodly have all the same law as the best, it may do more.

3. Moreover, an ungodly man may live under a most powerful preacher, that will never let him alone in his sins, and may stir up much fear in him and many good purposes, and almost persuade him to be a true Christian ; and not only to have some ineffectual wishings and strivings against sin, but to do many things after the preacher, as Herod did

¹ See Acts xiv. 17. xvii. 27. Rom. i. 19, 20. ii. 7, 8, 9.

after John, and to escape the common pollutions of the world^r.

4. Some sharp affliction, added to the rest, may make him seem to others a true penitent: when he is stopped in his course of sin, as Balaam was by the angel, with a drawn sword, and seeth that he cannot go on but in danger of his life; and that God is still meeting him with some cross, and hedging up his way with thorns (for such mercy he sheweth to some of the ungodly): this may not only breed resistance of sin, but some reformation. When the Babylonians were planted in Samaria they feared not God, and he sent lions among them; and then they feared him, and set up some kind of service to him, performed by a base sort of priests; "they feared the Lord, and served their own gods," thinking it was safest to please all^a. Affliction maketh bad men most like to the good.

5. Good education and company may do very much: it may help them to much knowledge, and make them professors of strict religion; and constant companions with those that fear sin, and avoid it; and therefore they must needs go far then, as Joash did all the days of Jehoiada^t. As plants and fruits change with the soil by transplantation, and as the climate makes some blackmoors and some white, so education and converse have so great a power on the mind that they come next to grace, and are often the means of it.

6. And God giveth to many, internally, some grace of the Spirit, which is not proper to them that are saved, but common or preparatory only. And this may make much resistance against sin, though it do not mortify it. One that should live but under the convictions that Judas had when he hanged himself, I warrant he would have strivings and combats against sin in him, though he were unsanctified.

7. Yea, the interest and power of one sin may resist another: as covetousness may make much resistance against sensuality and pride of life, and pride may resist all disgraceful sin.

Tempt. viii. 'But, saith the tempter, it is not unpardoned sin, because thou art sorry and dost repent for it

^r 2 Pet. ii. 20.

^a 2 Kings xvii. 25. 32, 33.

^t 2 Chron. xxiv. 2.

when thou hast committed it : and all sin is pardoned that is repented of.'

Direct. VIII. All the aforesaid causes which may make some resistance of sin in the ungodly, may cause also some sorrow and repenting in them. There is repenting and sorrow for sin in hell. All men repent and are sorry at last ; but few repent so as to be pardoned and saved. When a sinner hath had all the sweetness out of sin that it can yield him, and seeth that it is all gone, and the sting is left behind, no marvel if he repent. I think there is scarcely any drunkard, or whoremonger, or glutton (that is not a flat infidel), but he repenteth of the sin that is past, because he hath had all out of it that it can yield him, and there is nothing left of it that is lovely : but yet he goeth on still, which sheweth that his repentance was unsound. True repentance is a thorough change of the heart and life ; a turning from sin to a holy life, and such a sorrow for what is past as would not let you do it, if it were to do again. If you truly repent, you would not do so again, if you had all the same temptations.

Tempt. IX. ' But, saith the tempter, it is but one sin, and the rest of thy life is good and blameless ; and God judgeth by the greater part of thy life, whether the evil or the good be most.'

Direct. IX. If a man be a murderer, or a traitor, will you excuse him, because the rest of his life is good, and it is but one sin that he is charged with ? One sort of poison may kill a man ; and one stab at the heart, though all his body else be whole : you may surfeit on one dish : one leak may sink a ship. " Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, is guilty of all^u." Indeed God doth judge by the bent of thy heart, and the main drift and endeavour of thy life. But canst thou say, that the bent of thy heart, and the main endeavour of thy life is for God, and heaven, and holiness ? No : if it were, thou wert regenerate ; and this would not let thee live in any one beloved, chosen, wilful sin. The bent of a man's heart and life may be sinful, earthly, fleshly, though it run but in the channel of one way of gross sinning ! As a man may be covetous, that hath but one trade ; and a whoremonger, that hath but one whore ;

^u Jam. ii. 10. See Ezek. xviii. 10, 11.

and an idolater, that hath but one idol. If thou lovedst God better, thou wouldst let go thy sin; and if thou love any one sin better than God, the whole bent of thy heart and life is wicked: for it is not set upon God and heaven, and therefore is ungodly.

Tempt. x. ‘But, saith the tempter, it is not reigning, unpardoned sin, because thou believest in Jesus Christ; and all that believe, are pardoned, and justified from all their sin.’

Direct. x. He that savingly believeth in Christ, doth take him entirely for his Saviour and Governor; and giveth up himself to be saved, sanctified, and ruled by him: as trusting your physician, implieth that you take his medicines, and follow his advice, and so trust him; and not that you trust to be cured while you disobey him, by bare trusting: so is it as to your faith and trust in Christ; it is a belief or trust, that he will save all those that are ruled by him in order to salvation. “He is the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him^x.” If you believe in Christ, you believe Christ: and if you believe Christ, you believe, “that except a man be converted, and born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven^y”; and that he that is “in Christ, is a new creature; old things are past away, and all is become new^z”; and that “without holiness none shall see God^a.” And that “no fornicator, effeminate, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, extortioners, murderers, liars, shall enter into, or have any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ^b.” If you believe Christ, you must believe that you cannot be saved, unless you be converted. It is the devil, and not Christ, that telleth you you may be pardoned and saved in an unholy, unregenerate state: and it is sad, that men should believe the devil, and call this a believing in Christ, and think to be saved for so believing; as if false faith and presumption pleased God! Christ will not save men for believing a lie, and believing the father of lies before him: nor will he save all that are confident they shall be saved. If you think you have any part in Christ, remember Rom. viii. 9. “If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his^c.”

^x Heb. v. 9.

^y John iii. 3. 5. Matt. xviii. 3.

^z 2 Cor. v. 17.

^a Heb. xii. 14.

^b 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. Ephes. v. 4—6. Rev. xxi. 27.

^c See more of Temptations, Chap. iii. Direct. 9.

CHAPTER II.

Directions to Young Christians, or Beginners in Religion, for their Establishment and Safe Proceeding^a.

BEFORE I come to the common Directions, for the exercise of grace, and walking with God, containing the common duties of Christianity, I shall lay down some previous instructions, proper to those that are but newly entered into religion; presupposing what is said in my book of Directions to those that are yet under the work of conversion, to prevent their miscarrying by a false or superficial change.

Direction 1. 'Take heed, lest it be the novelty or reputation of truth and godliness, that takes with you, more than the solid evidence of their excellency and necessity: lest, when the novelty and reputation are gone, your religion wither and consume away.'

It is said of John and the Jews, by Christ, "He was a burning and a shining light, and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light^b." All men are affected most, with things that seem new and strange to them. It is not only the infirmity of children, that are pleased with new clothes, and new toys and games; but even to graver, wiser persons, new things are most affecting, and commonness and custom dulls delight. Our habitations, and possessions, and honours, are most pleasing to us at the first; and every condition of life, doth most affect us at the first. If nature were not much for novelty, the publishing of news-books would not have been so gainful a trade so long, unless the matter had been truer, and more desirable. Hence it is, that changes are so welcome to the world, though they prove, ordinarily, to their cost. No wonder then, if religion be the more acceptable, when it comes with this advantage. When men first hear the doctrine of godliness, and the tidings of another world, by a powerful preacher opened and set home, no wonder if things of so great moment affect them for a time. It is said of them that received the seed of God's

^a I have since written a book on this subject, to which I refer the reader for fuller direction.

^b John v. 35.

Word as into stony ground, that “forthwith it sprung up” and they “anon with joy received it^c ;” but it quickly withered for want of rooting. These kind of hearers can no more delight, still in one preacher, or one profession, or way, than a glutton in one dish, or an adulterer in one harlot; for it is but a kind of sensual or natural pleasure that they have in the highest truths; and all such delight must be fed with novelty, and variety of objects. The Athenians were inquisitive after Paul’s doctrine, as novelty, though after, they rejected it, as seeming to them incredible. “May we know what this new doctrine whereof thou speakest, is? for thou bringest certain strange things to our ears: we would know therefore, what these things mean. (For all the Athenians and strangers which were there, spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing^d).”

To this kind of professors, the greatest truths grow out of fashion, and they grow weary of them, as of dull and ordinary things: they must have some new light, or new way of religion, that lately came in fashion: their souls are weary of that manna, that at first was acceptable to them, as angel’s food. Old things seem low, and new things high to them; and to entertain some novelty in religion, is to grow up to more maturity: and too many such, at last so far overthrive their old apparel, that the old Christ, and old Gospel are left behind them.

The light of the Gospel is more speedily communicated, than the heat: and this first part being more acceptable to them, is soon received: and religion seemeth best to them at first. At first they have the light of knowledge alone: and then they have the warmth of a new and prosperous profession. There must be some time for the operating of the heat, before it burneth them: and then they have enough, and cast it away in as much haste as they took it up. If preachers would only lighten, and shoot no thunderbolts, even a Herod himself would “hear them gladly, and do many things after them:” but when their Herodias is meddled with, they cannot bear it. If preachers would speak only to men’s fancies or understandings, and not meddle too smartly with their hearts, and lives, and carnal interests, the world would bear them, and hear them as they do stage-

^c Matt. xiii. 5. 20.

^d Acts xvii. 19—21.

players, or at least as lectures in philosophy, or physic. A sermon that hath nothing but some general, toothless notions, in a handsome dress of words, doth seldom procure offence or persecution. It is rare that such men's preaching is distasted by carnal hearers, or their persons hated for it. "It is a pleasant thing for the eyes to behold the sun^e;" but not to be scorched by its heat. Christ himself at a distance, as promised, was greatly desired by the Jews; but when he came, they could not bear him: his doctrine and life were so contrary to their expectations. "The Lord whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple even the Messenger of the Covenant whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts. But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap^f." Many when they come first (by profession) to Christ, do little think that he would cast them into the fire, and refine them, and purge away their dross, and cast them anew into the mould of the Gospel^g. Many will play awhile by the light, that will not endure to be melted by the fire. When the preacher cometh once to this, he is harsh, and intolerable, and loseth all the praise which he had won before, and the pleasing novelty of religion is over with them. The Gospel is sent to make such work in the soul and life, as these tender persons will not endure. It must captivate every thought to Christ, and kill every lust and pleasure which is against his will; and put a new and heavenly life into the soul. It must possess men with deep and lively apprehensions of the great things of eternity. It is not wavering, dull opinions, that will raise and carry on the soul, to such vigorous, constant, victorious action, as is necessary to salvation. When the Gospel cometh to the heart, to do this great, prevailing work, then these men are impatient of the search and smart, and presently have done with it. They are like children, that love the book, for the gilding and fineness of the cover, and take it up as soon as any; but it is to play with, and not to learn: they are weary of it when it comes to that. At first many come to Christ with wonder, and will needs be his servants, for something in it that seemeth fine: till they hear that the Son of Man hath not the accommodation of the birds or

^e Eccles. xi. 7.^f Mal. iii. 1—3.^g Rom. vi. 17.

foxes; and that his doctrine and way hath an enmity to their worldly, fleshly interest, and then they are gone. They first entertained Christ, in compliment, thinking that he would please them, or not much contradict them; but when they find that they have received a guest, that will rule them, and not be ruled by them, that will not suffer them to take their pleasure, nor enjoy their riches, but hold them to a life which they cannot endure, and even undo them in the world, he is then no longer a guest for them. Whereas, if Christ had been received as Christ, and truth and godliness deliberately entertained, for their well discerned excellency and necessity, the deep rooting would have prevented this apostasy, and cured such hypocrisy.

But, alas! poor Ministers find, by sad experience, that all prove not saints that flock to hear them, and make up the crowd; nor that “for a season rejoice in their light,” and magnify them, and take their parts. The blossom hath its beauty and sweetness; but all that blossometh, or appeareth in the bud, doth not come to perfect fruit: some will be blasted, and some blown down; some nipt with frosts; some eaten by worms; some quickly fall; and some hang on, till the strongest blasts do cast them down: some are deceived and poisoned by false teachers; some by worldly cares, and the deceitfulness of riches become unfruitful, and are turned aside: the lusts of some had deeper rooting than the Word; and the friends of some had greater interest in them than Christ, and therefore they forsake him to satisfy their importunity: some are corrupted by the hopes of preferment, or the favour of man: some feared from Christ by their threats and frowns, and choose to venture on damnation, to escape persecution: and some are so worldly wise, that they can see reason to remit their zeal, and can save their souls and bodies too; and prove that to be their duty, which other men call sin (if the end will but answer their expectations): and some grow weary of truth and duty, as a dull and common thing, being not supplied with that variety, which might still continue the delights of novelty.

Yet mistake not what I have said, as if all the affection furthered by novelty, and abated by commonness and use, were a sign that the person is but an hypocrite. I know

that there is something in the nature of man, remaining in the best, which disposeth us to be much more passionately affected with things, when they seem new to us, and are first apprehended, than when they are old, and we have known or used them long. There is not, I believe, one man of a thousand, but is much more delighted in the light of truth, when it first appeareth to him, than when it is trite, and familiarly known; and is much more affected with a powerful Minister at first, than when he hath long sat under him. The same sermon, that even transported them at the first hearing, would affect them less, if they had heard it preached an hundred times. The same books, which greatly affected us at the first or second reading, will affect us less when we have read them over twenty times. The same words of prayer, that take much with us when seldom used, do less move our affections, when they are daily used all the year. At our first conversion, we have more passionate sorrow for our sin, and love to the godly, than we can afterwards retain. And all this is the case of learned and unlearned, the sound and unsound, though not alike. Even heaven itself is spoken of by Christ, as if it did participate of this, when he saith, that "joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth; more than over ninety and nine just persons, that need no repentance^s." And I know, it is the duty of Ministers to take notice of this disposition in their hearers, and not to dull them with giving them still the same, but to profit them by a pleasant and profitable variety: not by preaching to them another Christ, or a new Gospel: it is the same God, and Christ, and Spirit, and Scripture, and the same heaven, the same church, the same faith, and hope, and repentance, and obedience, that we must preach to them, as long as we live: though they say, we have heard this an hundred times, let them hear it still, and bring them not à new creed. If they hear so oft of God, and Christ, and heaven, till by faith, and love, and fruition, they attain them as their end, they have heard well. But yet there is a grateful variety of subordinate particulars, and of words, and methods, and seasonable applications, necessary to the right performance of our ministry, and to the profiting

^s Luke xv. 7. 10.

of the flocks: though the physician use the same apothecary's shop, and dispensatory, and drugs, yet how great a variety must he use of compositions, and times, and manner of administration?

But for all this, though the best are affected most with things that seem new, and are dulled with the long and frequent use of the same expressions, yet they are never weary of the substance of their religion, so as to desire a change. And though they are not so passionately affected with the same sermons, and books, or with the thoughts, or mention of the same substantial matters of religion, as at first they were; yet do their judgments more solidly and tenaciously embrace them, and esteem them, and their wills ~~as~~ resolutely adhere to them, and use them, and in their lives they practise them, better than before. Whereas, they that take up their religion but for novelty, will lay it down when it ceaseth to be new to them, and must either change for a newer, or have none at all^b.

And as unsound are they, that are religious, only because their education, or their friends, or the laws, or judgment of their rulers, or the custom of the country, hath made it necessary to their reputation. These are hypocrites at the first setting out, and therefore cannot be saved by continuance in such carnal religiousness as this. I know law, and custom, and education, and friends, when they side with godliness, are a great advantage to it, by affording helps, and removing those impediments that might stick much with carnal minds. But truth is not your own, till it be received in its proper evidence; nor your faith divine, till you believe what you believe, because God is true who doth reveal it; nor are you the children of God, till you love him for himself; nor are you truly religious, till the truth and goodness of religion itself, be the principal thing that maketh you religious. It helpeth much to discover a man's sincerity, when he is not only religious among the religious, but among the profane, and the enemies, and scorers, and persecutors of religion: and when a man doth not pray only in a praying family, but among the prayerless, and the deriders of fervent, constant prayer: and when a man is heavenly among

^b Fere idem itaque exitus est odii et amoris insani. Senec. de Ben. lib. vi. c. 25. Elz. 1649. p. 511.

men that are earthly; and temperate among the intemperate and riotous; and holdeth the truth among those that approach it, and that hold the contrary: when a man is not carried only by a stream of company, or outward advantages of his religion; nor avoideth sin for want of a temptation; but is religious, though against the stream, and innocent when cast, unwillingly, upon temptations; and is godly where godliness is accounted singularity, hypocrisy, faction, humour, disobedience, or heresy: and will rather let the reputation of his honesty, than his honesty itself.

Direct. 11. ‘Take heed of being religious only in opinion, without zeal, and holy practice; or only in zealous action, without a sound, well-grounded judgment: but that judgment, zeal, and practice be conjunct.

Of the first part of this advice (against bare opinionative religion), I have spoken already, in my “Directions for a sound Conversion.” To change your opinions, is an easier matter than to change the heart and life. A holding of the truth, will save no man, without a love and practice of the truth. This is the meaning of St. James, where he speaketh much of the unprofitableness of a dead, ineffectual belief, that worketh not by love, and commandeth not the soul to practice and obedience. To believe that there is a God, while you neglect him, and disobey him, is unlike to please him. To believe that there is a heaven, while you neglect and prefer the world before it, will never bring you thither. To believe your duty, and not to perform it; and to believe that sin is evil, and yet to live in it; is to sin with aggravation, and have no excuse, and not the way to be accepted or justified with God. To be of the same belief with holy men, without the same hearts and conversations, will never bring you to the same felicity. “He that knoweth his master’s will, and doth it not, shall be” so far from being accepted for it, that he shall be “beaten with many stripes.” To believe that holiness and obedience is the best way, will never save the disobedient and unholy.

And yet if judgment be not your guide, the most zealous affections will but precipitate you; and make you run, though quite out of the way, like the horses when they have lost the coachman or the riders^r. To ride post when you

^r *Scientia quæ est remota à justitia, calliditas potius quam sapientia appellanda.*

are quite out of the way, is but laboriously to lose your time, and to prepare for further labour. The Jews that persecuted Christ and his apostles, had the testimony of Paul himself, that they had a “zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.” And Paul saith of the deceivers and troublers of the Galatians (whom he wisheth even cut off), that they did zealously affect them, but not well^k. And he saith of himself, while he persecuted the Christians to prison and to death, “I was zealous towards God as ye are all this day^l.” Was not the Papist, St. Dominick, that stirred up the persecution against the Christians in France and Savoy, to the murdering of many thousands of them, a very zealous man? And are not the butchers of the Inquisition zealous men? And were not the authors of the third Canon of the General Council at the Lateran, under Pope Innocent the Third, very zealous men, who decreed that the Pope should depose temporal lords, and give away their dominions, and absolve their subjects, if they would not exterminate the godly called heretics? Were not the Papists’ powder-plotters zealous men? Hath not zeal caused many of later times, to rise up against their lawful governors? and many to persecute the church of God, and deprive the people of their faithful pastors without compassion on the people’s souls? Doth not Christ say of such zealots, “The time cometh, when whosoever killeth you will think he doth God service^m, (or offereth a service acceptable to God.) Therefore Paul saith, “It is good to be zealously affected always in a good thingⁿ.” Shewing you that zeal indeed is good, if sound judgment be its guide. Your first question must be, Whether you are in the right way? and your second, Whether you go apace? It is sad to observe what odious actions are committed, in all ages of the world, by the instigation of misguided zeal? And what a shame an imprudent zealot—to his profession, while making himself ridiculous in the

est. P. Scalig. The imprudencies of well-meaning men, have done as much hurt to the church sometimes, as the persecution of enemies. e. g. When Constantine, the son of Constans, was emperor, some busy men would prove, from the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity, that his two brethren, Tiberius and Heraclius, should reign with him, saying, Si in Trinitate credimus, tres etiam coronemus; which cost the chief of them a hanging. Abbas Urspergens. edit. Melanct. p. 162.

^k Rom. x. 2. Gal. iv. 17.

^l Acts xxii. 3, 4.

^m John xvi. 2.

ⁿ Gal. iv. 18.

eyes of the adversaries, he brings his profession itself into contempt, and maketh the ungodly think that the religious are but a company of transported, brain-sick zealots; and thus are hardened to their perdition. How many things doth unadvised affection provoke well-meaning people to, that afterwards will be their shame and sorrow.

Labour therefore for knowledge, and soundness of understanding; that you may know truth from falsehood, good from evil; and may walk confidently, while you walk safely; and that you become not a shame to your profession, by a furious prosecution of that which you must afterwards confess to be an error; by drawing others to that which you would afterwards wish that you had never known yourselves. And yet see that all your knowledge have its efficacy, upon your heart and life; and take every truth as an instrument of God, to reveal himself to you, or to draw your heart to him, and conform you to his holy will.

Direct. III. 'Labour to understand the true method of divinity, and see truths in their several degrees and order; that you take not the last for the first, nor the lesser for the greater. Therefore see that you be well grounded in the catechism; and refuse not to learn some catechism that is sound and full, and keep it in memory while you live.'

Method, or right order, exceedingly helpeth understanding, memory, and practice°. Truths have a dependence on each other; the lesser branches spring out of the greater, and those out of the stock and root. Some duties are but means to other duties, or subservient to them, and to be measured accordingly; and if it be not understood which is the chief, the other cannot be referred to it. When two things, materially good, come together, and both cannot be done, the greater must take place, and the lesser is no duty at that time, but a sin, as preferred before the greater. Therefore it is one of the commonest difficulties among cases of conscience, to know which duty is the greater, and to be preferred. Upon this ground, Christ healed on the sabbath-day, and pleaded for his disciples rubbing the ears

° *Opus est imprimis duplici catechismo: uno compendario et brevi quem memoriter addiscant; ubi summa sit eorum omnium quæ ad fidem et mores Christiano sunt necessaria: altero uberiore, ubi eadem amplius, dilucidiusque dicantur, et copiosus confirmetur: ut ille prior discipulis potius, hic posterior ipsis præceptoribus usu sit.* Acosta, lib. v. c. 14. p. 490.

of corn, and for David's eating the shew-bread, and tell them, that "the sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath, and that God will have mercy, and a sacrifice."

Divinity is a curious, well-composed frame. As it is, not enough that you have all the parts of your watch or clock but you must see that every part be in its proper place, else it will not go or answer its end; so it is not enough that you know the several parts of Divinity or duty, unless you know them in their true order and place. You may be confounded before you are aware, and led into many dangerous errors, by mistaking the order of several truths; and you may be misguided into heinous sins, by mistaking the degrees and order of duties. As when duties of piety and charity seem to be competitors: and when you think that the commands of men contradict the commands of God and when the substance and the circumstances or modes of duty are in question before you as inconsistent: or when the means seemeth to cease to be a means, by crossing the end: and in abundance of such cases, you cannot easily conceive what a snare it may prove to you to be ignorant of the methods and ranks of duty.

Objection. If that be so, what man can help being confounded in his religion, when there be so few that observe any method at all, and few that agree in method, and none that hath published a scheme or method so exact and clear as to be commonly approved by Divines themselves. What then can ignorant Christians do?

Answer. Divinity is like a tree that hath one trunk and thence a few greater arms or boughs, and thence thousand smaller branches: or like the veins, or nerves, or arteries in the body, that have first one or few trunks divided into more, and those into a few more, and those into more, till they multiply at last into more than can easily be seen or numbered. Now it is easy for any man to begin at the chief trunk, and to discern the first divisions, and then next, though not to comprehend the number and order of all extreme and smaller branches. So is it in Divinity: it is not very hard to begin at the unity of the eternal God

P Stoici dicunt virtutes sibi invicem ita esse connexas, ut qui unam habuerit, omnes habeat. Diog. Laert. in Zenone, lib. vii. segm. 125. p. 444.

head, and see there a trinity of persons, and of primary attributes, and of relations; and to arise to the principal attributes and works of God as in these relations, and to the relations of man to God, and to the great duties of these relations, to discern God's covenants and chiefest laws, and the duty of man in obedience thereto, and the judgment of God in the execution of his sanctions: though yet many particular truths be not understood. And he that beginneth and proceedeth as he ought, doth know methodically so much as he knoweth; and he is in the right way to the knowledge of more: and the great mercy of God hath laid so great a necessity on us to know these few points that are easily known, and so much less need of knowing the many small particulars, that a mean Christian may live uprightly, and holy, and comfortably, that well understandeth his catechism, or the creed, Lord's prayer, and ten commandments, and may find daily work and consolation in the use of these.

A sound and well-composed catechism, studied well and kept in memory, would be a good measure of knowledge to ordinary Christians, and make them solid and orderly in their understanding, and in their proceeding to the smaller points; and would prevent a great deal of error and miscarriage, that many by ill teaching are cast upon, to their own and the churches' grief! Yea, it were to be wished, that some teachers of late had learned so much and orderly themselves.

Direct. iv. 'Begin not too early with controversies in religion: and, when you come to them, let them have but their due proportion of your time and zeal: but live daily upon these certain, great substantials, which all Christians are agreed in.'

1. Plunge not yourselves too soon into controversies: for, (1.) It will be exceedingly to your loss, by diverting your souls from greater and more necessary things: you may get more increase of holiness, and spend your time more pleasingly to God, by drinking in deeper the substantials of religion, and improving them on your hearts and lives.

(2.) It will corrupt your minds, and instead of humility, charity, holiness, and heavenly-mindedness, it will feed

your pride, and kindle faction and a dividing zeal, and quench your charity, and possess you with a wrangling, contentious spirit, and you will make a religion of these sins and lamentable distempers.

(3.) And it is the way to deceive and corrupt your judgments, and make you erroneous or heretical, to your own perdition, and the disturbance of the church: for it is two to one but either you presently err, or else get such an itch after notions and opinions that will lead you to error at the last. Because you are not yet ripe and able to judge of those things, until your minds are prepared by those truths that are first in order to be received. When you undertake a work that you cannot do, no wonder if it be ill done, and must be all undone again, or worse.

Perhaps you will say, that you must not take your religion upon trust, but must “prove all things, and hold fast that which is good.”

Answer. Though your religion must not be taken upon trust, there are many controverted, smaller opinions that you must take upon trust, until you are capable of discerning them in their proper evidence. Till you can reach them yourselves, you must take them on trust, or not at all. Though you must believe all things of common necessity to salvation with a divine faith; yet many subservient truths must be received first by a human faith, or not received at all until you are more capable of them. Nay, there is a human faith necessarily subservient to the Divine faith, about the substance of religion; and the officers of Christ are to be trusted in their office, as helpers of your faith. Nay, let me tell you, that while you are young and ignorant, you are not fit for controversies about the fundamentals of religion themselves. You may believe that there is a God, long before you are fit to hear an atheist proving that there is no God: you may believe the Scripture to be the word of God, and Christ to be the Saviour, and the soul to be immortal, long before you will be fit to manage or study controversies hereupon. For nothing is so false or bad, which a wanton or wicked wit may not put a plausible gloss upon; and your raw, unfurnished understandings will scarcely be able to see through the pretence, or escape the cheat. When you *cannot answer the arguments of seducers, you will find them*

have a doubting in your minds ; for you know not how to obtain the answer of them is to wiser men. And though you must prove all things, you must do it in due order, and as you are able : and stay till your furnished minds are capable of the trial. If you will needs read before you know your letters, or pretend to judge of Greek and Hebrew authors before you can read English, you will but become ridiculous in your undertaking.

2. When you do come to smaller controverted points, let them have but their due proportion of your time and zeal. And that will not be one hour in many days, with the generosity of private Christians. By that time you have well learned the more necessary duties, you will find that there will be but little time to spare for lesser controversies. Opinionists that spend most of their time in studying and talking of such points do steal that time from greater matters, and therefore from God and from themselves : better work undone the while. And they that here lay out their chiefest zeal divert their zeal from things more necessary, and turn their natural heat into a fever.

3. The essential, necessary truths of your religion, must imprint the image of God upon your hearts, and must dwell there continually, and you must live upon them as your bread, and drink, and daily necessary food : all other points must be studied in subserviency to those. All lesser duties must be used as the exercise of the love of God or man, and of a humble, heavenly mind. The articles of your creed, and points of catechism are fountains ever running, affording you matter for the continual exercise of grace : it is both plentiful and solid nourishment of the soul, which these great, substantial points afford. To know God the Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, the laws and covenant of God, and his judgment, and rewards and punishments, with the parts and method of the Lord's prayer, which must be the daily exercise of our desires and love : this is the wisdom of a Christian, and in these must he be continually exercised.

You will say, perhaps, that the apostle saith, " Leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works," &c.

Answer. 1. By " leaving " he meaneth not passing over the

practice of them, as men that have done with them are past; but his leaving at that time to discourse them, or his supposing them taught already: though I lay not the foundation again, yet he doth not pluck it up. 2. By “principles” he meaneth the first points to be taught and learned, and practised: and, indeed, regeneration at baptism is not to be done again: but the essentials of religion, which I am speaking of, contain much more; especially to live in the love of God, which Paul calls “the more excellent way.” 3. “Going on to perfection,” is not by ceasing to believe and love God, but by a more distinct knowledge of the mysteries of salvation, to perfect our faith and love, and obedience.

The points that opinionists call higher, and think to be the principal matter of their growth, and advancement in understanding, are usually but some smaller, less necessary truths, if not some uncertain, doubtful questions.

Direct. v. ‘Be very thankful for the great mercy of your conversion: but yet overvalue not your first degrees of knowledge or holiness; but remember that you are yet but in your infancy, and must expect your growth and ripeness as the consequent of time and diligence.’

You have great reason to be more glad and thankful, for the least measure of true grace, than if you had been made the rulers of the earth: it being of a far more excellent nature, and entitling you to more than all the kingdoms of the world. See my sermon called “Right Rejoicing,” on those words of Christ, “Rejoice not that the spirits are subject to you; but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven.” Christ will warrant you to rejoice, though enemies envy you, and repine both at your victory and triumph. If there be “joy in heaven in the presence of the angels” at your conversion, there is great reason you should be glad yourselves. If the prodigal’s father will needs have the best robe and ring brought forth, and the fat calf killed, and the music to attend the feast, that they may eat and be merry: there is great reason that the prodigal son himself should not have the smallest share of joy: though his brother repine.

^r 1 Cor. xii. xiii. ^s Mark well 1 Tim. i. 4. and iv. 4. ² Tim. ii. 22. Tit. iii. 1. compared with John xvii. 3. Rom. xiii. 8—10. 1 Cor. xiii. 1 John iii. 1 Cor. i. 23. xv. 1—3. ii. 2. Gal. vi. 14. James ii. iii. 1.

^t Luke x. 20.

^u Luke xv. 23.

But yet, take heed lest you think the measure of your first endowments to be greater than it is². Grace imitateth nature, in beginning, usually, with small degrees, and growing up to maturity by leisurely proceeding. We are not new born in a state of manhood, as Adam was created. Though those texts that liken the kingdom of God to a grain of mustard-seed, and to a little leaven³, be principally meant of the small beginnings, and great increase of the church or kingdom of Christ in the world; yet it is true also of his grace, or kingdom in the soul. Our first stature is but to be "new-born babes desiring the sincere milk of the Word, that we may grow by it⁴." Note here, that the new birth bringeth forth but babes, but growth is by degrees, by feeding on the Word. The Word is received by the heart, as seed into the ground⁵. And seed useth not to bring forth the blade and fruit, to ripeness, in a day.

Yet I deny not, but that some men (as Paul) may have more grace at their first conversion, than many others have at their full growth. For God is free in the giving of his own, and may give more or less as pleaseth himself. But yet in Paul himself, that greater measure is but his smallest measure, and he himself is capable of increase to the last. And so great a measure at first is as rare, as his greater measure, at last, in its full growth, is rare, and scarce to be expected now.

And if God should give a great measure of holiness at first, to any now, as possibly he may, yet their measure of gifts is never great at first, unless they had acquired or received them before conversion. If grace find a man of great parts and understanding, which by study and other helps, he had attained before, no wonder if that man, when his parts are sanctified, be able in knowledge the first day: for he had it before, though he had not a heart to use it. But if grace find a man ignorant, unlearned, and of mean abilities, he must not expect to be suddenly lifted up to great understanding, and high degrees of knowledge by grace. For this knowledge is not given, now, by sudden infusion, as gifts were, extraordinarily, in the primitive church. You need no other proof of this but experience, to stop the mouth of

² Laertius saith of Cleanthus, "Cum aliquando probro ille daretur, quod esset timidus, At ideo, inquit, parum pecco." Diog. Laert. lib. vii. Segm. 171. p. 473.

³ Matt. xiii. 31. 33.

⁴ 1 Pet. ii. 2.

⁵ Matt. xiii.

any gainsayer. Look about you, and observe whether those that are men of knowledge, did obtain it by infusion, in a moment? or whether they did not obtain it by diligent study, by slow degrees? though I know God blesseth some men's studies more than others. Name one man that ever was brought to great understanding, but by means and labour, and slow degrees; or that knoweth any truth, in nature, or Divinity, but what he read, or heard, or studied for, as the result of what he read or heard. The person that is proudest of his knowledge, must confess that he came to it in this way himself.

But you will ask, 'What then is the illumination of the Spirit, and enlightening the mind, which the Scripture ascribeth to the Holy Ghost? Hath not our understanding need of the Spirit for light, as well as the heart or will for life?'

Ans. Yes, no doubt; and it is a great and wonderful mercy; and I will tell you what it is. 1. The Holy Spirit, by immediate inspiration, revealed to the apostles the doctrine of Christ, and caused them infallibly to indite the Scriptures. But this is not that way of ordinary illumination now. 2. The Holy Spirit assisteth us in our hearing, reading, and studying the Scriptures, that we may come, by diligence, to the true understanding of it; but doth not give us that understanding, without hearing, reading, or study. "Faith cometh by hearing^b." It blesseth the use of means to us, but blesseth us not in the neglect of means. 3. The Holy Spirit doth open the eyes and heart of a sinner, who hath heard, and notionally understood the substance of the Gospel, that he may know that piercingly, and effectually, and practically, which before he knew but notionally, and ineffectually: so that the knowledge of the same truth, is now become powerful, and, as it were, of another kind. And this is the Spirit's sanctifying of the mind, and principal work of saving illumination: not by causing us to know any thing of God, or Christ, or heaven, without means; but by opening the heart, that, through the means, it may take in that knowledge deeply, which others have but notionally, and in a dead opinion: and, by making our knowledge clear, and quick, and powerful, to affect the heart, and rule the

^b Rom. x. 17.

Sec. 4. The Holy Spirit sanctifieth all that notional knowledge which men had before their renovation. All their learning and parts are now made subservient to Christ, and to the right end, and turned into their proper channel. **5.** And the Holy Ghost doth, by sanctifying the heart, possess with such a love to God, and heaven, and holiness, and truth, as is a wonderful advantage to us, in our studies for the attaining of further knowledge. Experience telleth us, how great a help it is to knowledge, to have a constant love, slight and desire to the thing which we would know. All these ways the Spirit is the enlightener of believers.

The not observing this Direction, will have direful effects; which I will name, that you may see the necessity of avoiding them.

1. If you imagine that you are presently men of great understanding, and abilities, and holiness, while you are young beginners, and but new-born babes, you are entering to the snare and condemnation of the devil, even into the heinous sin of pride; yea, a pride of those spiritual gifts which are most contrary to pride; yea, and a pride of that which you have not, which is most foolish pride. Mark the words of Paul^c, when he forbids to choose a young beginner for religion to the ministry, “Not a novice, (that is, a young, new Christian) “lest being lifted up,” (or besotted) “with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil.” Why are young beginners more in danger of this, than other Christians? One would think their infancy should be conscious of its own infirmity. But Paul knew what he said. It is **1.)** Partly because the suddenness of their change, coming out of darkness, into a light which they never saw before, doth amaze them, and transport them, and make them think they are almost in heaven, and that there is not much more to be attained. Like the beggar that had an hundred pounds given him, having never seen the hundredth part before, imagined that he had as much money as the king. **(2.)** And **is** partly because they have not knowledge enough to know, how many things there are, that yet they are ignorant of. **3.** They never heard of the Scripture-difficulties, and the

^c 1 Tim. iii. 6.

^d Qui discipulum rudem et elatum habet, contra ventum adverso flumine navigat, pentem nutrit, aconitum excolet, hostem docet. Petrarch, Dial. 41. lib. 3.

knots in school divinity, nor the hard cases of conscience: whereas, one seven year's painful studies, will tell them of many hundred difficulties which they never saw: and forty or fifty year's study more, will clothe them with shame and humility, in the sense of their lamentable darkness. (3.) And it is, also, because the devil doth with greatest industry, lay this net to entrap young converts, it being the way in which he hath the greatest hope.

2. Your hasty conceits of your own goodness, or ability, will make you presumptuous of your own strength, and so to venture upon dangerous temptations, which is the way to ruin. You will think you are not so ignorant, but you may venture into the company of Papists, or any heretics or deceivers, or read their books, or be present at their worship. And I confess you may escape; but it may be otherwise, and God may leave you, to "shew you all that was in your hearts," as it is said of Hezekiah^c.

3. And your overvaluing your first grace, will make you too secure, when your souls have need of holy awfulness and care, "to work out your salvation with fear and trembling^d," and to "serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear, as knowing that he is a consuming fire^e," and security is the forerunner of a fall.

4. It will make you neglect the due labour and patience in the use of means for further knowledge and increase of grace, while you think you are so well already. And so you will be worse than those that are ever learning, and never come to any ripe knowledge; for you will think you are fit to be teachers, when you have need to be taught that which you will not submit to learn. And then "When for the time ye ought to have been teachers, you will have need to be catechised, or taught again which be the first principles of the oracles of God, as having need of milk, and not of strong meat." Mark here, how the Holy Ghost maketh time and exercise, necessary to such growth as must enable you to be teachers. Therefore he addeth, "But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age; those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil^f." Mark here, how wisdom and strength are to be expected.

^c 2 Chron. xxxii. 31. 25, 26.

^d Phil. ii. 12.

^e Heb. xii. 28, 29.

^f Heb. v. 12—14.

5. This over-hasty conceit of your own ability, will tempt you to run into controversies, and matters that you are not fit for; and so divert you from necessary and reasonable studies.

6. It will make you over confident of all your own opinions, and stiff in all your own conceits: too like him, Prov. xiv. 16. "The fool rageth and is confident." How many, and many a time have I heard a man, that understood not what he talked of, and could scarce speak sense, to plead for his opinion so confidently, as to scorn or pity the wisest contradictor, when his ignorance, and phrenetic confidence and rage, did make him a real object of pity, to men of ordinary understandings. There is a kind of madness in this disease, that will not leave you wit enough to know that you are mad.

7. It will make you also very censorious of others: this ignorant pride will make you think other men's knowledge to be ignorance, if they be not just of your fond opinions: and other men's graces to be none, if they be not of your mind and way. None are so ready as such, to censure those that are better than themselves, or that they have no acquaintance with, as being but civil, moral men, or being erroneous or deluded. It is a very loathsome thing, to hear an ignorant, self-conceited fellow to talk of those that are an hundred times wiser and much better than himself, as magisterially, with a proud compassion or contempt, as if he were indeed the wise man, that knoweth not what he saith.

8. And it will make you rebellious against your governors and teachers, and utterly unteachable, as despising those that should instruct and rule you. You will think yourselves wiser than your teachers, while you are but in the lowest form. It is such that James speaks to, chap. iii. 1. "My brethren, be not many masters (or teachers), knowing that ye shall receive the greater condemnation." And that whole chapter, well worth your studying, is spoke to such.

9. And thus it will entangle you in heretical opinions, to which there is no greater preparatory, than pride possessing half-witted, young beginners in religion.

10. And so it will make you troublers of the church, contending unpeaceably for that which you understand not.

11. And it tendeth to hypocrisy, making you give thanks for that which you never had, as puffed up with a knowledge that is not enough to keep you humble, and wanting the charity which would edify yourselves and others¹.

12. And it tendeth to delude you in point of assurance of salvation, taking your own over-valuing self-esteem, for true assurance; which is not ordinarily to be expected, till grace be come to greater strength.

13. Lastly, It tendeth to corrupt your apprehensions of the nature of Christianity itself; while you will judge of it in others, according to your own over-valued measure: when, if you knew it as it is, in the heart and practice of the sober, wise, humble, charitable, peaceable, mortified, heavenly believer, you would see that it hath a higher glory, than any that is manifested by you.

I have named to you all these sad effects of overvaluing your beginnings in religion, that as you love your souls, you may avoid them. I take it to be a matter of exceeding great moment, for your safety and perseverance, that while you are infants in grace, you know yourself to be such; that you may keep your form, and learn first, the lessons that must first be learned, and “walk humbly with your God, and obey those that are over you in the Lord^m,” and may wait on the Spirit, in the use of means, and may not rejoice the tempter, by corrupting all that you have received, and imitating him, in falling from your state of hope.

Direct. vi. ‘Be not discouraged at the difficulties and oppositions which will rise up before you, when you begin resolutely to walk with God.’

As discouragements keep off multitudes from religion, so they are great temptations to many young beginners to turn back, and as the Israelites in the wilderness, ready to wish themselves again in Egypt. Three sorts of discouragements arise before them. 1. Some from the nature of the work. 2. Some from God’s trials. 3. And some from the malice of the devil and his instruments: or all these.

1. It cannot be expected but that infants and weaklings should think a little burden heavy, and an easy work or journey to be wearisome: young beginners are ordinarily puzzled, and at a loss, in every trade, or art; or science.

¹ 1 Cor. viii. 1.

^m Heb. xiii. 7. 17. 1 Thes. i. 5. 12.

Young scholars have a far harder task, than when they are once well entered. Learning is wondrous hard and unpleasant to them, at the first; but when they are once well entered, the knowledge of one thing helps another, and they go on with ease. So a young convert, that hath been bred up in ignorance, and never used to hear prayer, or to heavenly discourse; nor to hear, or join with any that did, will think it strange and hard at first. And those that were used to take their pleasure, and fulfil the desires of the flesh, and perhaps to swear, and talk filthily, or idly, or to lie, will find, at first, some difficulty to overcome their customs, and live a mortified, holy life: (yet grace will do it, and prevail.) Especially in point-of knowledge, and ability of expression, be not too hasty in your expectation, but wait with patience, in a faithful, diligent use of the means, and that will be easy and delightful to you afterwards, which before discouraged you with its difficulties.

2. And God himself will have his servants, and his graces, tried and exercised by difficulties. He never intended us the reward for sitting still; nor the crown of victory, without a fight; nor a fight, without an enemy and opposition. Innocent Adam was unfit for his state of confirmation and reward, till he had been tried by temptation. Therefore the martyrs have the most glorious crown, as having undergone the greatest trial. And shall we presume to murmur at the method of God?

3. And satan, having liberty to tempt and try us, will quickly raise up storms and waves before us, as soon as we are set to sea; which make young beginners often fear, that they shall never live to reach the haven. He will shew thee the greatness of thy former sins, to persuade thee that they shall not be pardoned. He will shew thee the strength of thy passions and corruptions, to make thee think that they will never be overcome. He will shew thee the greatness of the opposition and suffering which thou art like to undergo, to make thee think thou shalt never persevere. He will do his worst to meet thee with poverty, losses, crosses, injuries, vexations, persecutions, and cruelties, yea, and unkindness from thy dearest friends, as he did by Job, to make thee think ill of God, or of his service. If he can, he will make them thy enemies that are of thine own household. He

will stir up thy own father, or mother, or husband, or wife, or brother, or sister, or children, against thee, to persuade or persecute thee from Christ: therefore Christ tells us, that if we hate not all these, that is, cannot forsake them, and use them as men do hated things; when they would turn us from him, we cannot be his disciplesⁿ. Look for the worst that the devil can do against thee, if thou hast once lifted thyself against him, in the army of Christ, and resolvest, whatever it cost thee, to be saved. Read Heb. xi. But how little cause you have to be discouraged; though earth and hell should do their worst, you may perceive by these few considerations.

(1.) God is on your side, who hath all your enemies in his hand, and can rebuke them, or destroy them in a moment. O what is the breath or fury of dust or devils, against the Lord Almighty? “If God be for us, who can be against us?” Read often that chapter, Rom. viii. In the day when thou didst enter into covenant with God, and he with thee, thou didst enter into the most impregnable rock and fortress, and house thyself in that castle of defence, where thou mayst (modestly) defy all adverse powers of earth or hell. If God cannot save thee, he is not God. And if he will not save thee, he must break his covenant. Indeed, he may resolve to save thee, not from affliction and persecution, but in it, and by it. But in all these sufferings you will “be more than conquerors, through Christ that loveth you.” that is, it is far more desirable and excellent, to conquer by patience, in suffering for Christ, than to conquer our persecutors in the field, by force of arms. O think on the saints’ triumphant boastings in their God: “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble: therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea^p.” When his “enemies were many” and “wrested his words daily,” and “fought against him, and all their thoughts were against him,” yet he saith, “What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee. In God I will praise his word; in God I have put my trust: I will not fear what flesh can do unto me^q.” Remember Christ’s charge, “Be not afraid of them that kill

ⁿ Luke xiv. 26. Matt. x.

^o Rom. viii. 31.

^p Psal. xvi. 1—3.

^q Psal. lvi. 1—5.

the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: fear him, which after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him^r." If all the world were on thy side, thou might yet have cause to fear; but to have God on thy side, is infinitely more.

(2.) Jesus Christ is the Captain of thy salvation^s, and hath gone before thee this way himself, and hath conquered for thee; and now is engaged to make thee conqueror: and darest thou not go on where Christ doth lead the way? He was perfected through suffering himself, and will see that thou be not destroyed by it. Canst thou draw back, when thou seest his steps, and his blood?

(3.) Thou art not to conquer in thy own strength, but by the Spirit of God, and the power of that grace, which is sufficient for thee, and his strength, which appeareth most in our weakness^t. And you "can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth" you^u: "be of good cheer, he hath overcome the world^x."

(4.) All that are in heaven have gone this way, and overcome such oppositions and difficulties as these. They were tempted, troubled, scorned, opposed, as well as you; and yet they now triumph in glory. "These are they that come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne, shall dwell among them^y. And all that ever come to heaven, at age, are like to come this way. And doth not the company encourage you? and the success of those that have overcome before you? Will you have the end, and yet refuse the way?

(5.) Consider how much greater difficulties ungodly men go through to hell. They have stronger enemies than you have: the devil and wicked men are your enemies; but God himself is theirs, and yet they will go on. Men threaten but death, to discourage you; and God threateneth damnation, to discourage them; and yet they go on, and are not discouraged. And will you be more afraid of man, than

^r Luke xii. 4 5.^s Heb. ii. 10.^t 2 Cor. xii. 9.^u Phil. iv. 13.^x John xvi. 33.^y Rev. vii. 14. 15.

sinners are of God? and of death or scorns, than they are of hell?

(6.) Yea, and you yourselves must cast your souls on these greater evils, if by discouragement you turn from the way of godliness. You must run into hell, for fear of burning; and upon everlasting death, to escape a temporal death, or less: you will choose God for your enemy, to escape the enmity of man: and how wise a course this is, judge you; when, if you do but see that “your ways please God,” he can “make your enemies be at peace with you,” if he see it for your good^y. If you will fear, fear him that can damn the soul.

(7.) Lastly, Remember what abundance of mercies you have to sweeten your present life, and to make your burden easy to you: you have all that is good for you in this life, and the promise of everlasting joy: “for godliness” thus “is profitable to all things^z.” What abundance of mercy, have you in your bodies, estates, friends, names, or souls, which are the greatest! What promises and experiences to refresh you! What liberty of access to God! A Christ to rejoice in! A heaven to rejoice in! and yet, shall a stony or dirty way, discourage you more, than these shall comfort you?

The sum of all is, your work will grow easier and sweeter to you, as your skill and strength increase. Your enemies are as grasshoppers before you: the power of the Almighty is engaged, by love and promise, for your help: and do you pretend to trust in God, and yet will fear the face of man? “I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting. For the Lord God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed. He is near that justifieth me; who will contend with me? let us stand together: who is mine adversary? let him come near to me. Behold, the Lord God will help me; who is he that shall condemn me? lo, they all shall wax old as a garment; the moth shall eat them up^a.” “Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be afraid of their

^y Prov. xvi. 7.

^z 1 Tim. iv. 8.

^a Isa. l. 6—9.

revivings. For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool: but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation^b." He is no soldier for Christ, that will turn back for fear of scorns, or of any thing that man can do against him.

And consider, whether heaven should be more easily come to? They are things of unspeakable glory that you strive for: and they are unworthily despised, if any thing be thought too good to part with for them, or any labour, or difficulties, or sufferings too great to undergo to procure them.

Direct. VII. 'If it be in your power, live under a judicious, faithful, serious, searching, powerful minister^c; and diligently attend his public teaching, and use his private counsel, for more particular directions and application, for the settling and managing the affairs of your souls; even as you take the advice of physicians for your health, and of lawyers for your estates, and tutors for your studies.'

I give this direction only to those that may enjoy so great a mercy, if they will. Some live where no such minister is. Some are children, or servants, or wives, that are bound, and cannot remove their habitations, or enjoy such liberty, by reason of the unwillingness and restraint of others. Some are so poor, that they cannot remove their dwelling, for such advantages. And some are so serviceable in their places, that they may be bound to stay under a very weak minister, that they may do good to others, where they have best opportunity. But let him that can be free, and pos-

^b Isa. li. 7, 8.

^c His maxime utile est nôsse ita esse præponendas verbis sententias, ut præpositur animus corpori: ex quo fit, ut ita malle debeant veriores quam disertiores audire sermones, sicut malle debent prudentiores quam formosiores habere amicos. Novissent etiam non esse vocem ad aures Dei nisi animi affectum: ita enim non irridebunt aliquos antistites et ministros forte animadverterint vel cum barbarismis et scœcismis Deum invocare, vel eadem verba quæ pronunciant, non intelligere, perturbateque distinguere. Vid. Filesacum de Episc. autorit. p. 103. Pœnituit multos vanæ stultitæ, cathedræ. Juven. Sat. 7. 203. Ruperti. p. 195. Italis Ciceronianis sum iniquior, quia tantum loquuntur verba, non res, et rhetorica ipsorum plerumque est *statuæ*: est *gloria sine textu*: *nix sine nucleo*: *nubes sine pluvîa*. *Plumæ sunt veliores quam avis ipse*. Bochart. Take heed lest prejudice, or any corruption, possess your minds; for then all that you hear, will be unsavoury, or unprofitable to you. Magna debet esse eloquentia, quæ invitis placeat, ait Senec. præf. lib. 10. Controv.

sess so great a mercy, accept it thankfully, though to his cost. As Christ said in another case, "Every man cannot receive the saying; but he that can receive it, let him."

There is abundance of difference between a weak, unskilful, inexperienced, dead-hearted, formal teacher, and such a one as is described in the Direction. Some that are senseless or indifferent, in such matters as these, themselves, would persuade you to be so too, and look first in your settlement to your bodily conveniences, and be content with such a teacher as accidentally you are cast upon. And they will tell you, that the work of grace dependeth not on the preacher's gifts, but on the gift, and blessing of the Spirit of God. The Formalists and the Enthusiasts concur in this, though from different principles. But though God can frustrate the fittest means, and can work without means, or by that which is least fitted to the end, yet it is his ordinary way to work by means, and that for the soul, as well as for the body; and to work most by the aptest means. And, I am sure, it is the duty of every teacher, to preach in the fittest manner that he can, for the people's edification; and not to do God's work deceitfully, and inaptly, because God can bless the unfittest means: and it is the people's duty to attend upon the best they can enjoy, though God can equally work by the weakest, or by none. As that pretence will not excuse the contemners of God's ordinances; that upon every little business stay at home, and attend upon no ministry at all; no more will it excuse them, that refuse that help that is most suited to their edification, and take up with a worse, when they might have a better. We are not to neglect duty, upon a presumptuous expectation of miraculous or extraordinary works. When we can have no better, we may hope for the greater benefit from the weakest; but not when it is the choice of our own presumptuous, irreligious hearts. God can make Daniel and his companions to thrive better by eating pulse, than others that fed at the table of the king: and rather than sin against God, we must cast ourselves on him for unusual supplies, or leave all to his will. But few would therefore be persuaded causelessly, to live on pulse, when they may have better. And one would think this truth, should have no contradiction, especially from those men, that are apt to obscure and extenuate,

the Spirit's operations on the soul, and to confess no grace, but what consisteth in a congruous ordination of means and circumstances. When their doctrine layeth all a man's hopes of salvation, upon this congruity of means and circumstances, should they afterwards teach men to undervalue, or neglect the fittest, and wilfully cast their souls upon the most unfit and unlikely means? But ungodliness first resolveth what to speak against, before it resolveth what to say; and will contradict God's word, though it contradict its own; and will oppose holiness, though by a self-opposing.

But the spiritual relish and experience of the godly, is a very great preservative to them, against such deluding reasonings as these. It is harder for a sophister, of greatest subtlety or authority, to persuade him that hath tasted them, that sugar is bitter, or wormwood sweet, than to persuade him to believe it, that never tasted them. And it is hard to make a healthful man believe, it is best for him to eat but once a week, or best to live on grass, or snow. I doubt not, but those that now I speak to, have such experience and perception of the benefit of a judicious and lively ministry, in comparison of the ignorant, cold, and lifeless, that no words will make them indifferent herein. Have you not found the ministry of one sort enlighten, and warm, and quicken, and comfort, and strengthen you, much more than of the other? I am sure I have the common sense and experience of the faithful on my side, in this, which were enough of itself, against more than can be said against it. Even new-born babes in Christ, have in their new natures, a desire, not to senseless or malicious pratings, but to the rational, sincere milk, (*τὸ λογικὸν ἄδολον γάλα,*) that they may grow by it, and to perform to God a rational service^d.

And it must needs be a very proud and stupid heart, that can be so insensible of its own infirmity, sinfulness, and necessity, as to think the weakest, dullest Minister may serve their turns; and that they are able to keep up their life, and vigour, and watchfulness, and fruitfulness, with any little, ordinary help. I cannot but fear, such men know not what the power and efficacy of the Word upon the heart and conscience mean; nor what it is, to live a life of faith and

^d Rom. xii. 1.

holiness, and to watch the heart, and walk with God. If they did, they could not but find so much difficulty herein, and so much backwardness and unskilfulness in themselves, hereto, as would make them feel the necessity of the greatest helps; and, it could not be but they must feel the difference, between a clear and quickening sermon, and an ignorant, heartless, dead discourse, that is spoken as if a man were talking in his sleep, or of a matter that he never understood, nor had experience of.

Alas! how apt are the best to cool, if they be not kept warm by a powerful ministry! How apt to lose the hatred of sin, the tenderness of conscience, the fervency in prayer, the zeal and fulness in edifying discourse, and the delights and power of heavenly meditations, which before we had! How apt is faith to stagger if it be not powerfully under-proped, by the helpers of our faith! How hardly do we keep up the heat of love, the confidence of hope, the resolution and fulness of obedience, without the help of a powerful ministry! Nay, how hardly do we do our part in these, in any tolerable sort, even while we have the clearest, liveliest helps, that are ordinarily to be had! And can any, that are not blind, and proud, imagine that they are so holy and good, that they are above the necessity of such assistance; and that the weakest breath is enough to kindle the fire of holy love and zeal, and keep them in the fear and obedience of God? Alas! we are under languishing weakness, and must be dieted with the best, or we shall soon decay; we are cripples, and cannot go or stand without our crutches. And there must be some savour of the Spirit in him, that will be fit to make us spiritual, and some savour of faith and love in him, that would kindle faith and love in us; and he must speak clearly and convincingly, that will be understood, and will prevail with such as we; and he must speak feelingly, that would make us feel, and speak seriously, that would be much regarded by us, and would make us serious.

And ministers are not set up only for public preaching, but for private counsel also, according to our particular needs. As physicians are not only to read you instructions for the dieting and curing of yourselves; but to be present in your sickness, to direct you in the particular application of remedies. And as lawyers are to assist you in your particular

cases, to free your estates from encumbrances, and preserve or rescue them from contentious men. Choose, therefore, some able minister to be your ordinary counsellor in the matters of God. And let him be one that is humble, faithful, experienced, and skilful; that hath leisure, ability, and willingness to assist you*.

As infants in a family are unable to help themselves, and need the continual help of others, and therefore God hath put into the hearts of parents a special love to them, to make them diligent and patient in helping them: so is it in the family of Christ; most Christians, by far, are young or weak in understanding and in grace. It is long before you will be past the need of others' help, if ever, in this life. If you feel not this your infirmity and need, it is so much the greater. God will have no men to be self-sufficient: we shall all have need of one another, that we may be useful to one another; and God may use us as his messengers and instruments of conveying his mercies to each other; and that even self-love may help us to be sociable, and to love one another. And our souls must receive their part of mercy, by this way of communication, as well as our bodies: and therefore, as the poor, above all men, should not be against charity, and communicating, that need it most; so young Christians that are weak and unexperienced, above all others, should be most desirous of help, especially from an able, faithful guide.

But be sure you deal sincerely, and cheat not yourselves, by deceiving your counsellor, and hiding your case. To do so by your lawyer, is the way to lose your suit; and to do so by your physician is the way to lose your life; and to do so with your pastor, and soul-counsellor is the way to lose your souls. And let the judgment of your pastor or judicious

* Acosta noteth it as a great hindrance of the Indians' conversion, that their Teachers shift for better livings, and stay not till they are well acquainted with the people, and that the Bishops are of the same temper: *Hæc tanta clades est animarum, ut satis deplorari non possit; nihil sacerdos Christi præclari proficiet in salute Indorum, sine familiari et hominum et rerum notitiâ.* lib. iv. c. 10. p. 390. Sunt autem multi qui in juncto munere copiose se satis facere existimant, orationem dominicam et symbolum et salutationem angelicam, tum præcepta decalogi Hispan. idiomate identidem Indis recitantes, eorum infantes baptizantes, mortuos sepelientes, matrimonio juvenes collocantes, et rem sacram festis diebus facientes.— Neque conscientiam, quam vitam canterizatam non habeant, mordentur quod dispersæ sint oves domini, &c. c. 7. p. 373.

friend about the state of your souls, be much regarded by you, though it be not infallible. How far such must be trusted, I am afterward to open to you, with other of your duties belonging to you in this relation, I now only proceed to general advice.

Direct. viii. ‘Keep right apprehensions of the excellency of charity and unity among believers, and receive nothing hastily that is against them; especially take heed lest under pretence of their authority, their number, their soundness, or their holiness, you too much addict yourselves to any sect or party, to the withdrawing of your special love and just communion from other Christians, and turning your zeal to the interest of your party, with a neglect of the common interest of the church: but love a Christian as a Christian, and promote the unity and welfare of them all.’

Use often to read and well consider the meaning and reason of those many urgent passages in Scripture, which exhort all Christians to unity and love. Such as John xi. 52. xvii. 11. 21—23. 1 Cor. iii. 10. 17. and xii. throughout: 2 Cor. xiii. 11. 1 Thess. v. 12, 13. Phil. ii. 1—3. 1 Pet. iii. 8. Rom. xvi. 17. 1 Cor. i. 10. iii. 3. and xi. 18. And John xiii. 35. Rom. xii. 9, 10. xiii. 10. 2 Cor. xiii. 11. Gal. v. 6, 13, 22. Col. i. 4. 1 Thess. iv. 9. 1 John iii. 14. 23. and iv. 7, 11. 16. 19, 20, 21. Surely, if the very life of godliness lay not much in unity and love, we should never have had such words spoken of it, as here you find. Love is to the soul, as our natural heat is to the body: whatever destroyeth it destroyeth life; and therefore cannot be for our good. Be certain, that opinion, course, or motion tends to death, that tends to abate your love to your brethren, much more which under pretence of zeal, provoketh you to hate and hurt them. To divide the body is to kill it, or to maim it: dividing the essential, necessary parts is killing it: cutting off any integral part is maiming it. The first can never be an act of friendship, which is the worst that an enemy can do: the second is never an act of friendship, but when the cutting off a member which may be spared is of absolute necessity to the saving of the whole an, from the worse division between soul and body. By

* Against uncharitableness and schism, see more in part II. ch. 23.

this judge what friends dividers are to the church, and how well they are accepted of God.

He that loveth any Christian aright must needs love all that appear to him as Christians. And when malice will not suffer men to see Christianity in its profession, and credible appearance in another, this is as well contrary to Christian love, as hating him when you know him to be a true Christian. Censoriousness (not constrained by just evidence) is contrary to love, as well as hatred is.

There is an union and communion with Christians as such: this consisteth in having one God, one head, one spirit, one faith, one baptismal covenant, one rule of holy living, and in loving and praying for all, and doing good to as many as we can. This is an union and communion of mind, which we must hold with the catholic church through the world. And there is a bodily, local union and communion, which consisteth in our joining in body, as well as mind, with particular congregations: and this, as we cannot hold it with all, nor with any congregation, but one at once; so we are not bound to hold it with any that will drive us from it, unless we will commit some sin: statedly we must hold it, with the church which regularly we are joined to and live with; and occasionally we must hold it with all others, where we have a call and opportunity, who in the substance worship God according to his Word, and force us not to sin in conformity to them. It is not schism to lament the sins of any church, or of all the churches in the world: the catholic church on earth consists of sinners. It is not schism to refuse to be partaker in any sin of the purest church in the world: obedience to God is not schism. It is not schism that you join not bodily with those congregations where you dwell not, nor have any particular call to join with them; nor that you chuse the purest and most edifying society, rather than one that is less pure and profitable to you; 'cæteris paribus,' supposing you are at liberty: nor that you hold not bodily communion with that church, that will not suffer you to do it, without sinning against God; nor that you join not with the purest church, when you are called to abide with one less pure.

But it is worse than schism to separate from the universal church: to separate from its faith is apostasy to

infidelity. To separate from it in some one or few essential articles, while you pretend to hold to Christ the head is heresy : to separate from it in spirit, by refusing holiness, and not loving such as are truly holy, is damning ungodliness or wickedness : to differ from it by any error of judgment or life, against the law of God, is sin. To magnify any one church or party, so as to deny due love and communion to the rest, is schism. To limit all the church to your party, and deny all or any of the rest to be Christians, and parts of the universal church, is schism by a dangerous breach of charity ; and this is the principal schism that I here admonish you to avoid. It is schism also to condemn unjustly any particular church, as no church : and it is schism to withdraw your bodily communion from a church that you were bound to hold that communion with, upon a false supposition that it is no church, or is not lawfully to be communicated with. And it is schism to make divisions or parties in a church, though you divide not from that church. Thus I have (briefly) told you what is schism.

1. One pretence for schism is (usurped) authority, which some one church may claim to command others that owe them no subjection. Thus pride, which is the spirit of hell, having crept into the church of Christ, and animated to usurpations of lordship and dominion, and contending for superiority, hath caused the most dangerous schisms in the church, with which it was ever infested. The bishop of Rome (advantaged by the seat and constitution of that empire) having claimed the government of all the Christian world, condemneth all the churches that will not be his subjects ; and so hath made himself the head of a sect, and of the most pernicious schism that ever did rend the church of Christ : and the bishop of Constantinople, and too many more, have followed the same method in a lower degree, exalting themselves above their brethren, and giving them laws, and then condemning and persecuting them that obey them not. And when they have imposed on other churches their own usurped authority and laws, they have laid the plot to call all men schismatics and sectaries, that own not their tyrannical usurpation, and that will not be schismatics and sectaries with them : and the cheat lieth in this, that they confound the churches' unity with their pre-

ended authority, and schism with the refusal of subjection to them. . If you will not take them for your lords, they cry out that you divide from the church: as if we could hold communion with no churches, but those whose bishops we obey? Communion with other churches is maintained by faith and charity, and agreement in things necessary, without subjection to them. As we may hold all just communion with the churches in Armenia, Arabia, Russia, without subjection to their bishops, so may we with any other church besides that of which we are members. Division or schism is contrary to unity and concord, and not to an usurped government: though disobedience to the pastors which God hath set over us is a sin, and dividing from them is a schism. Both the Pope and all the lower usurpers should do well first to shew their commission from God to be our rulers, before they call it schism to refuse their government. If they had not made better advantage of fire and sword, than of Scripture and argument, the world would not have laughed them to scorn, when they had heard them to say, 'All are schismatics that will not be our subjects: our dominion and will shall be necessary to the unity of the church.' The universal church indeed is one; united under one head and governor: but it is only Jesus Christ who is that head, and not any usurping vicar or Vice-Christ. The bishops of particular churches are his officers; but he hath deputed no vicar to his own office, as the universal head. Above all sects, take heed of this pernicious sect, who pretend their usurped authority for their schism, and have no way to promote their sect, but by calling all sectaries that will not be sectaries and subjects unto them.

2. Another pretence for schism is the numbers of the party. This is another of the Papists' motives: as if it were lawful to divide the church of Christ, if they can but get the greater party? They say, 'We are the most, and therefore you should yield to us:' (and so do others, where by the sword they force the most to submit to them.) But we answer them, As many as they are, they are too few to be the universal church. The universal church, containing all true, professing Christians, is much more than they. The Papists are not a third part, if a fourth, of the whole church. *Papists are a corrupted sect of Christians: I will*

be against dividing the body of Christ into any sects, rather than to be one of that sect or divided party, which is the greatest.

3. Another pretence for schism is the soundness or orthodoxness of a party. Almost all sects pretend that they are wiser and of sounder judgment than all the Christian world besides : yea, those that most palpably contradict the Scriptures (as the Papists in their half-communion and unintelligible service), and have no better reason why they so believe or do, but because others have so believed and done already.

But (1.) the greatest pretenders to orthodoxness are not the most orthodox : (2.) and if they were, I can value them for that which they excel, without abating my due respect to the rest of the church. (3.) For the whole church is orthodox in all the essentials of Christianity, or else they were not Christians : and I must love all that are Christians with that special love that is due to the members of Christ, though I must superadd such esteem for those that are a little wiser or better than others, as they deserve.

4. The fourth pretence for schism, is the holiness of the party that men adhere to. But this must make but a gradual difference, in our esteem and love to some Christians above others : if really they are most holy, I must love them most, and labour to be as holy as they ; but I must not therefore unjustly deny communion, or due respect, to other Christians that are less holy ; nor cleave to them as a sect or divided party, whom I esteem most holy. For the holiest are most charitable, and most against the divisions among Christians, and tenderest of their unity and peace.

The sum of this direction is : 1. Highly value Christian love and unity : 2. Love those most that are most holy, and be most familiar with them, for your own edification : and if you have your choice, hold local personal communion, with the soundest, purest, and best qualified church. 3. But entertain not hastily any odd opinion of a divided party ; or, if you do hold it as an opinion, lay not greater weight on it, than there is cause. 4. Own the best as best, but none as a divided sect ; and espouse not their dividing interest. 5. Confine not your special love to a party ; especially for agreeing in some opinions with you ; but extend

it to all the members of Christ. 6. Deny not local communion, when there is occasion for it, to any church that hath the substance of true worship, and forceth you not to sin. 7. Love them as true Christians and churches, even when they thus drive you from their communion.

It is a most dangerous thing to a young convert, to be ensnared in a sect: it will, before you are aware, possess you with a feverish, sinful zeal, for the opinions and interest of that sect; it will make you bold in bitter invectives and censures, against those that differ from them; it will corrupt your church-communion, and fill your very prayers with partiality and human passions; it will secretly bring malice, under the name of zeal, into your minds and words: in a word, it is a secret, but deadly enemy to Christian love and peace. Let them that are wiser, and more orthodox and godly than others, shew it, as the Holy Ghost directeth them: "Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying (or zeal) and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion (or tumult), and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality (or wrangling), and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace^b."

Direct. ix. 'Take heed lest any persecution or wrong from others, provoke you to any unwarrantable passions and practices, and deprive you of the charity, meekness, and innocency of a Christian; or make you go beyond your bounds, in censuring, reviling, or resisting your rulers, who are the officers of God.'

Persecution and wrongs are called temptations in Scripture, because they try you, whether you will hold your integrity. As many fall in such trials, through the fear of men, and the love of the world, and their prosperity; so when you seem most confirmed against any sinful compliance, there is a snare laid for you on the other side, to

^b James iii. 13 — 18.

draw you into passions and practices, that are unwarrantable.

Those that are tainted with pride, uncharitableness, and schism, will itch to be persecuting those that comply not with them in their way: and yet, while they do it, they will most cry out against pride, uncharitableness, and schism themselves. This is, and hath been, and will be too ordinary in the world. You may think that schism should be far from them, that seem to do all for order and unity. But never look to see this generally cured, when you have said and done the best you can: you must, therefore, resolve, not only to fly from church-division yourselves, but also to undergo the persecutions or wrongs of proud or zealous church-dividers. It is great weakness in you, to think such usage strange: do you not know that enmity is put, from the beginning, between the woman's and the serpent's seed? And do you think the name, or dead profession of Christianity, doth extinguish the enmity in the serpent's seed? Do you think to find more kindness from proud, ungodly Christians, than Abel might have expected from his brother Cain? Do you not know that the Pharisees (by their zeal for their pre-eminence, and traditions, and ceremonies, and the expectation of worldly dignity and rule from the Messiah,) were more zealous enemies of Christ, than the heathens were? and that the carnal members of the church, are oft the greatest persecutors of the spiritual members? "As then he that was born after the flesh, did persecute him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now¹" (and will be). It is enough for you, that you shall have the inheritance, when the sons of the bondwoman shall be cast out. It is your taking the ordinary case of the godly for a strange thing, that makes you so disturbed and passionate, when you suffer: and reason is down, when passion is up. It is by overwhelming reason with passion and discontent, that "oppression maketh" some "wise men mad²:" for passion is a short, imperfect madness. You will think in your passion, that you do well, when you do ill; and you will not perceive the force of reason, when it is ever so plain and full against you. Remember, therefore, that the great motive that causeth the devil to persecute you is not

¹ Gal. iv. 29.

² Eccles. vii. 7.

to hurt your bodies, but to tempt your souls to impatience and sin: and if it may be said of you as of Job, "In all this Job sinned not¹," you have got the victory, and are "more than conquerors^m."

Doth it seem strange to you, that "few rich men are saved," when Christ telleth you it is "so hard," as to be "impossible with menⁿ?" Or is it strange, that rich men should be the ordinary rulers of the earth? Or is it strange, that the wicked should hurt the godly, and the world hate them that are "chosen out of the world?" What of all this should seem strange? Expect it as the common lot of the faithful, and you will be better prepared for it.

See therefore that you "resist not evil^o" (by any revengeful, irregular violence): "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers, and not resist lest they receive damnation^p." Imitate your Lord, that "when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered he threatened not, but committed all to him that judgeth righteously; leaving us an ensample, that we should follow his steps^q." An angry zeal against those that cross and hurt us is so easily kindled and hardly suppressed, that it appeareth there is more in it of corrupted nature than of God. We are very ready to think that we may "call for fire from heaven" upon the enemies of the Gospel: but "you know not what manner of spirit ye are then of^r." But Christ saith unto you, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven^s." You find no such prohibition against patient suffering wrong from any. Take heed of giving way to secret wishes of hurt to your adversaries, or to return reproachful words against them: take heed of hurting yourself by passion or sin, because others hurt you by slanders or persecutions. Keep you in the way of your duty, and leave your names and lives to God. Be careful that you keep your innocency, and in your patience possess your souls, and God will keep you from any hurt from enemies, but what he will cause to work for your good.

¹ Job i. 22.^m Rom. viii. 37—39.ⁿ Luke xviii. 27.^o Matt. v. 39.^p Rom. xiii. 1—3.^q 1 Pet. ii. 21, 23.^r Luke ix. 55.^s Matt. v. 44, 45.

Read Psalm xxxvii. "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass. And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noon-day. Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass. Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in anywise to do evil."

Direct. x. 'When you are repenting of, or avoiding any extreme, do it not, without sufficient fear and caution of the contrary extreme.'

In the esteem and love of God, your ultimate end, you need not fear overdoing: nor any where, when impediments and backwardness or impotency, do tell you that you can never do too much. But sin lieth on both sides the rule and way: and nothing is more common, than to turn from one sin to another, under the name of duty or amendment. Especially this is common in matter of opinion: some will first believe, that God is nothing else but mercy, and after, take notice of nothing but his justice. First, they believe that almost all are saved, and afterwards, that almost none: first, that every profession is credible, and next, that none is credible without some greater testimony: first, that Christ satisfied for none at all that will not be saved, and next, that he died for all alike: first, that none are now partakers of the Holy Spirit; and next, that all saints have the Spirit, not only to illuminate and sanctify them, by transcribing the written Word upon their hearts; but also to inspire them with new revelations, instead of Scripture. First, they think that all that Papists hold or do, must be avoided; and after, that there needed no reformation at all. Now, they are for legal bondage, and anon for libertinism: to-day, for a liberty in religion to none, that agree not with them in every circumstance; and to-morrow, for a liberty to all: this year, all things are lawful to them; and the next year, nothing is lawful, but they scruple all that they say or do. One while, they are all for a worship of mere show and ceremony; and another while, against the determination of mere circumstances of order and decency, by man. One while, they cry nothing but free grace; and another while, nothing but

free will. One while, they are for a discipline stricter than the rule; and another while, for no discipline at all. First, for timorous compliance with evil; and afterwards, for boisterous contempt of government. Abundance of such instances we might give you.

The remedy against this disease, is, to proceed deliberately, and receive nothing, and do nothing rashly and unadvisedly in religion. For, when you have found out your first error, you will be affrighted from that, into the contrary error. See that you look round about you; as well to the error that you may run into on the other side, as into that which you have run into already. Consult also with wise, experienced men: and mark their unhappiness, that have fallen on both sides; and stay not to know evil by sad experience. True mediocrity is the only way that is safe: though negligence and lukewarmness be odious, even when cloaked with that name.

Direct. xi. 'Let not your first opinions, about the controverted difficulties in religion, where Scripture is not very plain, be too peremptory, confident, or fixed; but hold them modestly, with a due suspicion of your unripe understandings, and with room for further information, supposing it possible, or probable, that upon better instruction, evidence, and maturity, you may, in such things, change your minds.'

I know, the factious, that take up their religion on the credit of their party, are against this Direction: thinking that you must first hit on the right church, and then hold, all that the church doth hold; and therefore change your mind in nothing, which you this way receive. I know, also, that some libertines and half-believers, would corrupt this Direction, by extending it to the most plain and necessary truths; persuading you to hold Christianity itself, but as an uncertain, probable opinion.

But, as God's foundation standeth sure, so we must be surely built on his foundation. He that believeth not the essentials of Christianity, as a certain, necessary revelation of God, is not a Christian, but an infidel. And he that believeth not all that he understandeth in the Word of God, believeth nothing on the credit of that Word. Indeed faith hath its weakness, on those that are sincere; and they are fain to lament the remnants of unbelief, and cry, "Lord in-

crease our faith : help thou our unbelief." But he, that approveth of his doubting, and would have it so, and thinks the revelation is uncertain, and such as will warrant no firmer a belief, I should scarcely say, this man is a Christian. Christianity must be received as of divine, infallible revelation. But controversies about less necessary things, cannot be determined peremptorily, by the ignorant or young beginners, without hypocrisy, or a human faith going under the name of a Divine. I am far from abating your Divine belief of all that you can understand in Scripture, and implicitly of all the rest in general. And I am far from diminishing the credit of any truth of God. But the reasons of this Direction, are these,

1. When it is certain that you have but a dark, uncertain apprehension of any point, to think it is clear and certain, is but to deceive yourselves by pride. And, to cry out against all uncertainty, as scepticism, which yet you cannot lay aside, is but to revile your own infirmity, and the common infirmity of mankind, and foolishly to suppose that every man can be as wise and certain, when he list, as he should be. Now reason and experience will tell you, that a young, unfurnished understanding, is not like to see the evidence of difficult points, as, by nearer approach, and better advantage it may do.

2. If your conclusions be peremptory, upon mere self-conceitedness, you may be in an error for aught you know : and so you are but confident in an error. And then how far may you go in seducing others, and censuring dissenters, and come back when you have done, and confess that you were all this while mistaken yourselves.

3. For a man to be confident that he knoweth what he knoweth not, is but the way to keep him ignorant, and shut the door against all means of further information. When the opinion is fixed by prejudice and conceit, there is no ready entrance for the light.

4. And, to be ungroundedly confident, so young, is not only to take up with your teacher's word, instead of a faith and knowledge of your own, but also to forestall all diligence to know more : and so you may lay by all your studies, save only to know what those men hold, whose judgments are your religion : too popish and easy a way to be safe.

5. If you must never change your first opinions or apprehensions, how will you grow in understanding? Will you be no wiser at age, than you were at childhood, and after long study and experience, than you were before? Nature and grace do tend to increase.

Indeed, if you should be never so peremptory in your opinions, you cannot resolve to hold them to the end: for light is powerful, and may change you whether you will or no: you cannot tell what that light will do, which you never saw. But prejudice will make you resist the light, and make it harder for you to understand.

I speak this upon much experience and observation. Our first, unripe apprehensions of things, will certainly be greatly changed, if we are studious, and of improved understandings. Study the controversies about grace and free-will, or about other such points of difficulty, when you are young, and it is two to one that ripeness will afterward make them quite another thing to you. For my own part, my judgment is altered from many of my youthful, confident apprehensions: and where it holdeth the same conclusion, it rejecteth abundance of the arguments, as vain, which once it rested in. And where I keep to the same conclusions and arguments, my apprehension of them is not the same, but I see more satisfying light in many things, which I took but upon trust before. And if I had resolved to hold to all my first opinions, I must have forborne most of my studies, and lost much truth, which I have discovered, and not made that my own, which I did hold: and I must have resolved to live and die a child.

The sum is, Hold fast the substance of religion, and every clear and certain truth, which you see in its own evidence: and also reverence your teachers; especially the universal church, or the generality of wise and godly men; and be not hasty to take up any private opinion: and especially to contradict the opinion of your governors and teachers, in small and controverted things. But yet, in such matters, receive their opinions but with a human faith, till indeed you have more, and therefore, with a supposition, that time and study is very like to alter your apprehensions; and with a reserve, impartially to study, and entertain the truth, and not to sit still just where you were born.

Direct. XII. ‘If controversies occasion any divisions where you live, be sure to look first to the interest of common truth and good, and to the exercise of charity. And become not passionate contenders for any party in the division, or censurers of the peaceable, or of your teachers, that will not over-run their own understandings, to obtain with you the esteem of being orthodox or zealous men; but suspect your own unripe understandings, and silence your opinions till you are clear and certain; and join rather with the moderate and the peacemakers, than with the contenders and dividers.’

You may easily be sure, that division tendeth to the ruin of the church, and the hindrance of the Gospel; and the injury of the common interest of religion^u. You know it is greatly condemned in the Scriptures. You may know that it is usually the exercise, and the increase of pride, uncharitableness, and passion; and that the devil is best pleased with it, as being the greatest gainer by it. But, on the other side, you are not easily certain which party is in the right: and if you were, you are not sure that the matter will be worth the cost of the contention: or if it be, it is to be considered, whether the truth is not like to get more advantage by managing it in a more peaceful way, that hath no contention, nor stirreth up other men so much against it, as the way of controversy doth. And whatever it prove, you may and should know, that young Christians, that want both parts, and helps, and time, and experience to be thoroughly seen in controversies, are very unfit to make themselves parties; and that they are yet more unfit to be the hottest leaders of these parties, and to spur on their teachers, that know more than they. If the work be fit for another to do, that knoweth on what ground he goeth, and can foresee the end, yet certainly it is not fit for you. And therefore forbear it till you are more fit.

I know those that would draw you into such a contentious zeal, will tell you, that their cause is the cause of God, and that you desert him and betray it, if you be not zealous in it: and that it is but the counsel of flesh and blood which maketh you pretend moderation and peace: and that it is a sign that you are hypocrites, that are so lukewarm, and car-

^u Stoici dicunt cum nemine stultorum esse litigandum: omnesque stultos insauire. Diog. Laert. in Zenone, lib. viii. Segm. 124. p. 444.

ally comply with error: and that the cause of God is to be followed with the greatest zeal and self-denial. And all this is true, if you be but sure that it is indeed the cause of God; and that the greater works of God be not neglected on such pretences; and that your zeal be much greater for faith, and charity, and unity, than for your opinions. But upon great experience, I must tell you, that of the zealous contenders^{*} in the world, that cry up 'The cause of God, and Truth,' there is not one of very many, that understandeth what he talks of; but some of them cry up the cause of God, when it is a brat of a proud and ignorant brain, and such as a judicious person would be ashamed of. And some of them are rashly zealous, before they have parts or time to come to any judicious trial. And some of them are misguided by some person or party, that captivateth their minds. And some of them are hurried away by passion and discontent. And many of the ambitious and worldly are blinded by their carnal interests. And many of them in mere pride, think highly of an opinion, in which they are somewhat singular, and which they can, with some glorying, call their own, as either invented by them, or that, in which they think they know more than ordinary men do. And abundance, after long experience, confess that to have been their own erroneous cause, which they before entitled the cause of God. Now when this is the case, and one crieth, 'Here is Christ,' and another, 'There is Christ;' one saith, 'This is the cause of God,' and another saith, 'That is it;' no man that hath any care of his conscience, or of the honour of God and his profession, will leap before he looketh where he shall alight;

^{*} Consuming zeal, doth use at last to burn up the owners of it. Whatever they say or do against others, in their intemperate violence, they teach others at last to say and do against them, when they have opportunity. How the orthodox taught the Arians to use severity against them, may be seen in Victor. Utic. p. 447—449. in the edict of Hannerychus: *Legem quam dudum Christiani Imperatores nostri contra eos et alios hæreticos pro honorificentia Ecclesiæ Catholicæ dederunt, adversus nos illi proponere non erubuerunt. v. g. Rex Hun. &c. Triumphalis et Majestatis Regiæ probatur esse virtutis, mala in autores consilia retorquere: quisquis enim pravitatis aliquid invenerit, sibi imputet quod incurret. Nullos conventus hominum Sacerdotes assumant, nec aliquid mysteriorum, quæ magis polluant, sibi vindicent. Nullam habeant ordinandi licentiam. Quod ipsarum legum continentia demonstratur quas induxisse Imperatoribus, &c. viz. ut nulla, exceptis superstitionis eorum antistitibus, Ecclesia pateret; nullis liceret aliis aut convictus agere, aut exercere conventus, nec Ecclesias, aut in urbibus, aut in quibusdam minimis locis.*

or run after every one, that will whistle him with the name or pretence of truth or a good cause. It is a sad thing to go on many years together in censuring, opposing, and abusing those that are against you, and in seducing others, and misemploying your zeal, and parts, and time, and poisoning all your prayers and discourses, and in the end to see what mischief you have done for want of knowledge, and with Paul to confess, that you were mad in opposing the truth and servants of God, though you did it in a zeal of God through ignorance. Were it not much better to stay till you have tried the ground, and prevent so many years grievous sin, than to escape by a sad repentance, and leave behind you stinking and venomous fruits of your mistake? And worse, if you never repent yourselves. Your own and your brethren's souls, are not so lightly to be ventured upon dangerous, untried ways. It will not make the truth and church amends, to say at last, 'I had thought I had done well.' Let those go to the wars of disputing, and contending, and censuring, and siding with a sect, that are riper, and better understand the cause: wars are not for children. Do you suspend your judgment till you can solidly and certainly inform it; and serve God in charity, quietness, and peace, and it is two to one, but you will live to see the day, that the contenders that would have led you into their wars, will come off with so much loss themselves, as will teach them to approve your peaceable course; or teach you to bless God that kept you in your place and duty.

In all this, I deny not, but every truth of God is to be valued at a very high rate: and that he that shall carry himself in a neutrality, when faith or godliness is the matter in controversy, or shall do it merely for his worldly ends, to save his stake by temporizing, is a false-hearted hypocrite, and at the heart, of no religion. But withal I tell you, that all is not matter of faith or godliness, that the Autonomian-Papist, the Antinomian-Libertine, or other passionate parties shall call so. And, that as we must avoid contempt of the smallest truth, so we must much more avoid the most heinous sins, which we may commit for the defending of an error. And, that some truths must be silenced for a time, though not denied, when the contending for them is unseasonable, ~~th~~ to the injury of the church. If you were mas-

ters in the church, you must not teach your scholars to their hurt, though it be truth you teach them. And if you were physicians, you must not cram them, or medicate them to their hurt. Your power and duty is not to destruction, but to edification. The good of the patient is the end of your physic. All truth is not to be spoken, nor all good to be done, by all men, nor at all times. He that will do contrary, and take this for a carnal principle, doth but call folly and sin by the name of zeal and duty, and set the house on fire to roast his egg, and with the Pharisees, prefer the outward rest of their sabbath, before his brother's life or health. Take heed what you do when God's honour, and men's souls, and the church's peace are concerned in it.

And let me tell you my own observation. As far as my judgment hath been able to reach, the men that have stood for pacification and moderation, have been the most judicious, and those that have best understood themselves, in most controversies that ever I heard under debate among good Christians: and those that furiously censured them as lukewarm or corrupted, have been men that had least judgment, and most passion, pride, and foul mistakes in the points in question.

Nay, I will tell you more of my observation, of which these times have given us too much proof. Profane and formal enemies on the one hand, and ignorant, self-conceited wranglers on the other hand, who think they are champions for the truth, when they are venting their passions and fond opinions, are the two thieves, between whom the church hath suffered, from the beginning to this day. The first are the persecutors, and the other the dividers and disturbers of the church. Mark what the Holy Ghost saith in this case, "But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men." "Do all things without murmurings and disputings: that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom ye shine, as lights in the world." "If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is ac-

y 2 Tim. ii. 23, 24.

z Phil. ii. 14, 15.

according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing, but dotting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil-surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, &c.^a” “Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying, which is in faith: now the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned^b.”

Yet I must here profess, that if any false-hearted, worldly hypocrite, that resolveth to be on the saving side, and to hold all to be lawful, that seemeth necessary to his safety or preferments, shall take any encouragement from what I have here said, to debauch his conscience, and sell his soul, and then call all those furious zealots that will not be as false to God as he; let that man know, that I have given him no cloak for so odious a sin, nor will he find a cover for it at the bar of God, though he may delude his conscience, and bear it out by his carnal advantages before the world.

Direct. XIII. ‘Know that true godliness is the best life upon earth, and the only way to perfect happiness. Still apprehend it therefore, and use it as the best: and with great diligence resist those temptations which would make it seem to you a confounding, grievous, or unpleasant thing.’

There are all things concurrent in a holy life, to make it the most delectable life on earth, to a rational, purified mind that is not captivated to the flesh, and liveth not on air or dung. The object of it is the eternal God himself; the infallible Truth, the only satisfactory good; and all these condescending and appearing to us, in the mysterious, but suitable glass of a Mediator; redeeming, reconciling, teaching, governing, sanctifying, justifying and glorifying all that are his own. The end of it is the pleasing and glorifying our Maker, Redeemer and Sanctifier; and the everlasting happiness of ourselves and others. The rule of it is the infallible Revelation of God, delivered to the church by his Prophets, and his Son, and his Apostles, and comprised in the Holy Scriptures, and sealed by the miracles and operations of the Holy Ghost that did indite them. The work of godliness is a living unto God, and preparing for everlasting life, by foreseeing, foretasting, seeking, and rejoicing

^a 1 Tim. iii. 3–6.

^b 1 Tim. i. 4, 5.

in that endless happiness which we shall have with God ; and by walking after the Spirit, and avoiding the filthiness, delusions and vexations of the world and the flesh. The nature of man is not capable of a more noble, profitable and delectable life, than this which God hath called us to by his Son. And if we did but rightly know it, we should follow it with continual alacrity and delight. Be sure, therefore, to conceive of godliness as it is, and not as it is misrepresented by the devil and the ungodly. Read what I have written of this in my " A Saint or a Brute."

As long as a man conceiveth of religion as it is, even the most sweet and delectable life, so long he will follow it willingly and with his heart, and despise the temptations and avocations of fleshly gain and pleasure. He will be sincere, as not being only drawn by other men, or outward advantages, nor frightened into it by a passion of fearfulness, but loving religion for itself, and for its excellent ends ; and then he will be cheerful in all the duties of it ; and he will be most likely to persevere unto the end. We cannot expect that the heart or will should be any more for God and godliness, than the understanding practically apprehendeth them as good. Nay, we must always perceive in them a transcendant goodness, above all that is to be found in a worldly life ; or else the appearing goodness of the creature, will divert us, and carry away our minds. We may see in the very brutes, what a power apprehension hath upon their actions. If your horse be but going to his home or pasture, how freely will he go through thick and thin ! But if he go unwillingly, his travel is troublesome and slow, and you have much ado to get him on. It will be so with you in your way to heaven.

It is therefore the principal design of the devil, to hide the goodness and pleasantness of religion from you ; and to make it appear to you as a terrible or tedious life. By this means it is that he keeps men from it : and by this means he is still endeavouring to draw you back again, and frustrate your good beginnings and your hopes. If he can thus misrepresent religion to your understandings, he will suddenly alienate your will and corrupt your lives, and make you turn to the world again, and seek for pleasure somewhere else, and only take up with some heartless lip-service,

to keep up some deceitful hope of being saved. And the means which satan useth to these ends are such as these :

1. He will do his worst to overwhelm you with appearing doubts and difficulties, and bring you to a loss, and to make religion seem to you a confounding, and not a satisfying thing. This is one of his most dangerous assaults upon the weak and young beginners. Difficulties and passions are the things which he makes use of to confound you, and put you out of a regular, cheerful seeking of salvation. When you read the Scriptures, he will mind you of abundance of difficulties in all you read or hear. He will shew you seeming contradictions ; and tell you that you will never be able to understand these things. He will cast in thoughts of unbelief and blasphemy, and cause you, if he can, to roll them in your mind. If you cast them not out with abhorrence, but dispute with the devil, he hopes to prove too hard, at least, for such children and unprovided soldiers as you : and if you do reject them, and refuse to dispute it with him, he will sometime tell you that your cause is naught, or else you need not be afraid to think of all that can be said against it ; and this way he gets advantage of you to draw you to unbelief : and if you escape better than so, at least he will molest and terrify you with the hideousness of his temptations ; and make you think that you are forsaken of God, because such blasphemous thoughts have been so often in your minds : and thus he will one while tempt you to blasphemy, and another while affright and torment you with the thoughts of such temptations.

So, also, in the study of other good books, he will tempt you to fix upon all that seems difficult to you, and there to confound and perplex yourselves : and in your meditations, he will seek to make all to tend, but to confound and overwhelm you ; keeping still either hard or fearful things before your eyes ; or breaking and scattering your thoughts in pieces, that you cannot reduce them to any order, nor set them together, nor make any thing of them, nor drive them to any desirable end. So in your prayers he would fain confound you, either with fears, or with doubtful or distracting thoughts about God, or your sins, or the matter or manner of your duty, or questioning whe-

that your prayers will be heard. And so in your self-examination, he will still seek to puzzle you, and leave you more in darkness than you began, and make you afraid of looking homeward, or conversing with yourselves: like a man that is afraid to lie in his own house when he thinks it haunted with some apparitions. And thus the devil would make all your religion to be but like the unwinding of the bottom of yarn, or a skein of silk that is ravelled; that you may cast it away in weariness and despair.

Your remedy against this dangerous temptation is, to remember that you are yet young in knowledge, and that ignorance is like darkness that will cause doubts, and difficulties, and fears; and that all these will vanish as your light increaseth: and therefore you must wait in patience, till your riper knowledge fit you for satisfaction. And in the mean time, be sure that you take up your hearts most with the great, fundamental, necessary, plain and certain points, which your salvation is laid upon, and which are more suited to your state and strength. If you will be gnawing bones, when you should be sucking milk, and have not patience to stay till you are past your childhood, no marvel if you find them hard, and if they stick in your throats, or break your teeth. See that you live upon God in Christ, and love and practise what you know, and think of the excellency of so much as is already revealed to you. You know already what is the end that you must seek, and where your happiness consisteth; and what Christ hath done to prepare it for you, and how you must be justified, and sanctified, and walk with God. Have you God, and Christ, and heaven to think on, and all the mercies of the Gospel to delight in; and will you lay by these as common matters, or overlook them, and perplex yourselves about every difficulty in your way? Make clean work before you as you go, and live in the joyful acknowledgment of the mercies which you have received, and in the practice of the things you know, and then the difficulties will vanish as you go on.

2. Another of satan's wiles is, to confound you with the noise of sectaries, and divers opinions in religion; while the Popish sect tells you, that if you will be saved, you must be of their church; and others say, you must be of

theirs : and when you find that the sects are many, and their reasonings such as you cannot answer, you will be in danger either to take up some of their deceits, or to be confounded among them all, not knowing which church and religion to choose.

But here consider, that there is but one universal church of Christians in the world, of which Christ is the only king and head, and every Christian is a member. You were sacramentally admitted into this catholic church by baptism, and spiritually by being “born of the Spirit.” You have all the promises of the Gospel, that if you believe in Christ you shall be saved; and that all the living members of this church are loved by Christ as members of his body, and shall be presented unspotted to the Father, by him who is the Saviour of his body^c; “and that by one Spirit we are all baptized or entered into this one body^d.” If then thou hast faith, and love, and the Spirit, thou art certainly a Christian, and a member of Christ, and of this universal church of Christians. And if there were any other church, but what are the parts of this one, then this were not universal, and Christ must have two bodies. Thou art not saved for being a member of the church of Rome, or Corinth, or Ephesus, or Philippi, or Thessalonica, or of any other such; but for being a member of the universal church or body of Christ; that is, a Christian. And as thou art a subject of the king, and a member of this kingdom, whatever corporation thou be a member of (perhaps sometime of one, and sometime of another); so thou art a subject of Christ, whatever particular church thou be of: for it is no church if they be not Christians, or subjects of Christ. For one sect then to say, Ours is the true church, and another to say, Nay, but ours is the true church, is as mad as to dispute whether your hall, or kitchen, or parlour, or coal-house is your house; and for one to say, This is the house, and another, Nay, but it is that: when a child can tell them, that the best is but a part, and the house containeth them all. And for the Papists that take on them to be the whole, and deny all others to be Christians and saved, except the subjects of the Pope of Rome, it is so irrational, antichristian a fiction and usurpation, and odious, cruel,

^c Ephes. v. 23—27,

^d 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13.

and groundless a damnation of the far greatest part of the body of Christ, that it is fitter for detestation than dispute. And if such a crack would frighten the world out of their wits, no doubt but other bishops also would make use of it, and say, All are damned that will not be subject to us. But if you would see the folly and mischief of Popery, both in this and other points, I refer you to my "Treatise of the Catholic Church;" my "Key for Catholics;" my "Safe Religion;" my "Disputations against Johnson;" and my "Winding-Sheet for Popery."

3. Another temptation to confound you in your religion, is, by filling your heads with practical scrupulosity; so that you cannot go on for doubting every step whether you go right: and when you should cheerfully serve your Master, you will do nothing but disquiet your minds with scruples, whether this or that be right or wrong. Your remedy here is, not by casting away all care of pleasing God, or fear of sinning, or by debauching conscience; but by a cheerful and quiet obedience to God, so far as you know his will, and an upright willingness and endeavour to understand it better, and a thankful receiving the Gospel pardon for your failings and infirmities. Be faithful in your obedience; but live still upon Christ, and think not of reaching to any such obedience, as shall set you above the need of his merits, and a daily pardon of your sins. Do the best you can to know the will of God and do it. But when you know the essentials of religion, and obey sincerely, let no remaining wants deprive you of the comfort of so great a mercy, as proves your right to life eternal. In your seeking further for more knowledge and obedience, let your care be such as tendeth to your profiting, and furthering you to your end, and as doth not hinder your joy and thanks for what you have received: but that which destroyeth your joy and thankfulness, and doth but perplex you, and not further you in your way, is but hurtful scrupulosity, and to be laid by. When you are right in the main, thank God for that, and be further solicitous so far as to help you on, but not to hinder you. If you send your servant on your message, you had rather he went on his way as well as he can, than stand scrupling every step whether he should set the right or left foot forward? and whether he should step so far, or so far, at a time, &c. *Hindering scruples please not God.*

4. Another way to confound you in your religion, is, by setting you upon overdoing by inventions of your own: when a poor soul is most desirous to please God, the devil will be religious, and set him upon some task of voluntary humility or will-worship, as the apostle speaks of, Col. ii. 18. 20—23., or set him upon some ensnaring, unnecessary vows or resolutions, or some Popish works of conceited supererogation, which is that which Solomon calleth being “righteous over-much^c.” Thus many have made duties to themselves, which God never made for them; and taken that for sin, which God never forbad them. The Popish religion is very much made up of such commandments of their own, and traditions of men. As if Christ had not made us work enough, men are forward to make much more for themselves. And some that should teach them the laws of Christ, do think that their office is in vain, unless they may also prescribe them laws of their own, and give them new principles of religion. Yea, some that are the bitterest enemies to the strict observance of the laws of God, as if it were a tedious, needless thing, must yet needs load us with abundance of unnecessary precepts of their own. And thus religion is made both wearisome and uncertain, and a door set open for men to enlarge it, and increase the burden at their pleasure. Indeed, Popery is fitted to delude and quiet sleepy consciences, and to torment with uncertainties the consciences that are awaked.

And there is something in the corrupted nature of man, that inclineth him to some additions and voluntary service of his own inventions, as an offering most acceptable unto God. Hence it is that many poor Christians do rashly entangle their consciences with vows, of circumstances and things unnecessary, as to give so much, to observe such days or hours, in fasting and prayer; not to do such or such a thing that in itself is lawful; with abundance of such things, which perhaps some change of providence may make accidentally their duty afterwards, to do: or disable them to perform their vows: and then these snares are fetters on their perplexed consciences, perhaps, as long as they live. Yea, some of the Autonomians teach the people, that these things indifferent are the fittest matter of a vow; as

^c Eccles. vii. 16.

to live single, to possess nothing, to live in solitude, and the like: indeed all things lawful, when they are vowed, must be performed: but it is unfit to be vowed if it be not first profitable and best, for ourselves or others; and that which is best is not indifferent, it being every man's duty to choose what is best. Vows are to bind us to the performance of that which God had bound us to be by his laws before: they are our expression of consent and resolution by a self-obligation to obey his will: and not to make new duties of religion to ourselves, which else would never have been our duty.

To escape these snares, it is necessary that you take heed of corrupting your religion by burdens and mixtures of your own devising. You are called to obey God's laws, and not to make laws for yourselves. You may be sure that his laws are just and good, but your's may be bad and foolish. When you obey him, you may expect your reward and encouragement from him: but when you will obey yourselves, you must reward yourselves. You may find it enough for you to keep his laws, without devising more work for yourselves; or feigning duties which he commanded not, or sins which he forbade not. Be not rash in making vows: let them reach but unto necessary duties; and let them have their due exceptions when they are about alterable things. Or, if you are entangled by them already, consult with the most judicious, able, impartial men, that you may come clearly off without a wound. There is a great deal of judgment and sincerity necessary in your counsellors, and a great deal of submission and self-denial in yourselves, to bring you safely out of such a snare. Avoid sin whatever you do: for sinning is not the way to your deliverance. And, for the time to come, be wiser, and lay no more snares for yourselves; and clog not yourselves with your own inventions, but cheerfully obey what God commandeth you, who hath wisdom and authority sufficient to make you perfect laws. Christ's "yoke is easy," and his "burden light," and "his commandments are not grievous." But if your mixtures and self-devised snares are grievous to you, blame not God, but yourselves that made them.

Another of satan's ways to make religion burdensome

^f Matt. xi. 30.

^s 1 John v. 3.

and grievous to you is, by overwhelming you with fear and sorrow. Partly, by persuading that religion consisteth in excess of sorrow, and so causing you to spend your time in striving to trouble and grieve yourselves unprofitably, as if it were the course most acceptable to God : and partly, by taking the advantage of a timorous, passionate nature ; and so making every thought of God, or serious exercise of religion, to be a torment to you, by raising some overwhelming fears : for “fear hath torment,^b” In some feminine, weak and melancholy persons, this temptation hath so much advantage in the body, that the holiest soul can do but little in resisting it ; so that though there be in such a sincere love to God, his ways and servants, yet fear so playeth the tyrant in them, that they perceive almost nothing else. And it is no wonder if religion be grievous and unpleasant to such as these.

But, alas ! it is you yourselves that are the causes of this, and bring the matter of your grievance with you. God hath commanded you a sweeter work. It is a life of love, and joy, and cheerful progress to eternal joy that he requireth of you ; and no more fear or grief, than is necessary to separate you from sin, and teach you to value and use the remedy. The Gospel presenteth to you such abundant matter of joy and peace, as would make these the very complexion and temperature of your souls, if you received them as they are propounded. Religious fears when they are inordinate and hurtful, are sinful, and indeed against religion ; and must be resisted as other hurtful passions. Be better acquainted with Christ and his promises, and you will find enough in him to pacify the soul, and give you confidence and holy boldness in your access to Godⁱ. The spirit which he giveth is not the spirit of bondage, but the spirit of adoption, of love, and confidence^k.

6. Another thing that maketh religion seem grievous is, retaining unmortified, sensual desires. If you keep up your lusts, they will strive against the Gospel, and all the works of the Spirit will strive against them^l. And every duty will be so far unpleasant to you, as you are carnal, because it is against your carnal inclination and desire. Away, therefore,

^b 1 John iv. 18.

ⁱ Heb. iv. 16. Ephes. iii. 12. Heb. x. 19.

^k Rom. viii. 15. Heb. ii. 15.

with your beloved sickness, and then both your food and your physician will be less grievous to you. "Mortify the flesh, and you will less disrelish the things of the Spirit. For the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to his law, nor can be^m."

7. Another cause of confounding and wearying is, the mixture of your actual sins, dealing unfaithfully with God, and wounding your consciences by renewed guilt, especially of sins against knowledge and consideration. If you thus keep the bone out of joint, and the wound unhealed, no marvel if you are loath to work or travel. But it is your sin and folly that should be grievous to you, and not that which is contrary to it, and would remove the cause of all your troubles. Resolvedly forsake your wilful sinning, and come home by "repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christⁿ," and then you will find, that when the thorn is out, your pain will cease; and that the cause of your trouble was not in God or religion, but in your sin.

8. Lastly, To make religion unpleasant to you, the tempter would keep the substance of the Gospel unknown to, or unobserved by you. He would hide the wonderful love of God revealed in our Redeemer, and all the riches of saving grace, and the great deliverance and privileges of believers, and the certain hopes of life eternal: and the kingdom of God, which consisteth in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, shall be represented to you as consisting in errors only, or in trifles; in shadows and shews, and bodily exercise, which profiteth little^o. If ever you would know the pleasures of faith and holiness, you must labour above all to know God, as revealed in his infinite love in the Mediator; and read the Gospel as God's act of oblivion, and the New Testament and Covenant of Christ, in which he giveth you life eternal. And in every duty draw near to God as a reconciled Father, the object of your everlasting love and joy. Know and use religion as it is, without mistaking or corrupting it, and it will not appear to you as a grievous, tedious, or confounding thing.

Direct. xiv. 'Be very diligent in mortifying the desires and pleasures of the flesh; and keep a continual watch upon your senses, appetite, and lusts; and cast not yourselves

^m Rom. viii. 7, 8.

ⁿ Acts xx. 21.

^o 1 Tim. iv. 8.

upon temptations, occasions, or opportunities of sinning, remembering that your salvation lieth on your success.'

The lusts of the flesh, and the pleasures of the world, are the common enemies of God and souls, and the damnation of those souls that perish. And there is no sort more liable to temptations of this kind, than those that are in the flower of their youth and strength. When all the senses are in their vigour, and lust and appetite are in their strength and fury, how great is the danger! and how great must your diligence be if you will escape! The appetite and lust of the weak and sick, are weak and sick as well as they; and therefore they are no great temptation or danger to them. The desire and pleasure of the senses do abate, as natural strength and vigour doth abate. To such there is much less need of watchfulness: and where nature hath mortified the flesh, there is somewhat the less for grace to do. There needs not much grace to keep the aged and weak from fornication, uncleanness, excessive sports, and carnal mirth: and gluttony and drunkenness also, are sins which youth is much more liable to. Especially some bodies that are not only young and strong, but have, in their temperature and complexion, a special inclination to some of these, as lust, or sport, or foolish mirth; there needeth a great deal of diligence, resolution, and watchfulness for their preservation. Lust is not like a corrupt opinion, that surpriseth us through a defect of reason, and vanisheth as soon as truth appeareth; but it is a brutish inclination, which, though reason must subdue and govern, yet the perfectest reason will not extirpate, but there it will still dwell. And, as it is constantly with you, it will be stirring, when objects are presented by the sense or fancy, to allure. And it is like a torrent or a head-strong horse, that must be kept in at first, and is hardly restrained if it once break loose and get the head. If you are bred up in temperance and modesty, where there are no great temptations to gluttony, drinking, sports, or wantonness, you may think awhile that your natures have little or none of this concupiscence, and so may walk without a guard; but when you come where baits of lust abound, where women, and plays, and feasts, and drunkards are the devil's snares, and tinder, and bellows, to inflame your lusts, you may then find to your sorrow, that you had need of watchfulness, and

that all is not mortified that is asleep, or quiet in you. As a man that goeth with a candle among gunpowder, or near thatch, should never be careless, because he goeth in continual danger; so you that are young, and have naturally eager appetites and lusts, should remember, that you carry fire and gunpowder still about you, and are never out of danger while you have such an enemy to watch.

And if once you suffer the fire to kindle, alas! what work may it make, ere you are aware! "Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death^p." Little knoweth the fish, when he is catching, or nibbling at the bait, that he is swallowing the hook which will lay him presently on the bank. When you are looking on the cup, or gazing on alluring beauty, or wantonly dallying and pleasing your senses with things unsafe, you little know how far beyond your intentions you may be drawn, and how deep the wound may prove, how great the smart, or how long and difficult the cure. As you love your souls, observe Paul's counsel, "Flee youthful lusts^q?" Keep at a full distance: come not near the bait. If you get a wound in your consciences, by any wilful, heinous sin, O what a case will you be in! How heartless unto secret duty! afraid of God, that should be your joy; deprived of the comforts of his presence, and all the pleasure of his ways! How miserably will you be tormented, between the tyranny of your own concupiscence, the sting of sin, the gripes of conscience, and the terrors of the Lord! How much of the life of faith, and love, and heavenly zeal, will be quenched in a moment! I am to speak more afterwards of this; and therefore shall only say, at present, to all young converts that care for their salvation; "Mortify the flesh," and "always watch, and avoid temptations."

Direct. xv. "Be exceeding wary, not only what teachers you commit the guidance of your souls unto, but also with what company you familiarly converse; that they be neither such as would corrupt your minds with error, or your hearts with viciousness, profaneness, lukewarmness, or with a feverish, factious zeal: but choose, if possible, judicious,

^p James i. 14, 15.

^q 2 Tim. ii. 22.

holy, heavenly, humble, unblamable, self-denying persons, to be your ordinary companions, and familiars; but especially for your near relations.'

It is a matter of very great importance, what teachers you choose, in order to your salvation. In this the free grace of God much differenceth some from others: for, as poor heathens and infidels have none that know more, than what the book of nature teacheth (if so much); so in the several nations of Christians, it is hard for the people to have any, but such as the sword of the magistrate forceth on them, or the stream of their country's custom recommendeth to them. And it is a wonder, if pure truth and holiness be countenanced by either of these. But, when and where his mercy pleaseth, God sendeth wise and holy teachers, with compassion and diligence to seek the saving of men's souls; so that none but the malignant and obstinate are deprived of their help.

Ambitious, proud, covetous, licentious, ungodly men, are not to be chosen for your teachers, if you have your choice. In a nation where true religion is in credit, and hath the magistrate's countenance, or the major vote, some graceless men may join with better, in preaching and defending the purity of doctrine, and holiness of life: and they may be very serviceable to the church herein; especially in expounding and disputing for the truth. But even there, more experienced, spiritual teachers are much more desirable: they will speak most feelingly, who feel what they speak: and they are fittest to bring others to faith and love, who believe, and love God and holiness themselves. They that have life, will speak more lively than the dead. And in most places of the world, the ungodliness of such teachers makes them enemies to the truth, which is according to godliness: their natures are at enmity to the life and power of the doctrine, which they should preach: and they will do their worst to corrupt the magistrates, and make them of their mind: and, if they can but get the sword to favour them, they are, usually, the cruellest persecutors of the sincere. As it is notorious among the Papists, that the baits of power, and honour, and wealth, have so vitiated the body of their clergy, that they conspire to uphold a worldly government and religion; and, in express contra-

diction to sense and reason, and to antiquity, and the judgment of the church, and to the Holy Scriptures, they captivate the ignorant and sensual, to their tyranny and false worship, and use the seduced magistrates and multitude, to the persecuting of those that will not follow them, to sin and to perdition. Take heed of proud and worldly guides.

And yet it is not every one that pretendeth piety and zeal, that is to be heard, or taken for a teacher. But 1. Such as preach, ordinarily, the substantial truths which all Christians are agreed in. 2. Such as make it the drift of their preaching, to raise your souls to the love of God, and to a holy, heavenly life, and are zealous against confessed sin. 3. Such as contradict not the essential truths, by errors of their own: nor the doctrine of godliness, by wicked, malicious applications. 4. Such as drive not on any ambitions, tyrannical designs of their own, but deny themselves, and aim at your salvation. 5. Such as are not too hot in proselyting you to any singular opinion of their own: it being the prediction of Paul to the Ephesians, “of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.” 6. Such as are judicious with holy zeal, and zealous with judgment. 7. Such as are of experience in the things of God, and not young beginners, or novices in religion. 8. Such as bear reverence to the judgments of the generality of wise and godly men, and are tender of the unity of the church; and not such as would draw you into a sect or party, to the contempt of other Christians; no, not to a party that hath the favour of rulers and the people, to promote them. 9. Such as are gentle, peaceable, and charitable; and not such as burn with hellish malice against their brethren, nor with an ungodly, or cruel, consuming zeal. 10. Such as live not sensually and wickedly, contrary to the doctrines which they preach; but shew by their lives, that they believe what they say, and feel the power of the truths which they preach.

And your familiar companions have great advantage to help or hinder your salvation, as well as your teachers*.

* Acts xi. 30.

* *Magnum virtutis præsidium societas bonorum, socius exemplo excitat, sermone recreat, consilio instruit, orationibus adjuvat, autoritate continet, quæ omnia solitudini deest.* Jos. Acosta, lib. iv. c. 13. *Dicunt Stoici Amicitiam solos inter bonos, quos ubi*

The matter is not so great, whom you meet by the way, or travel with, or trade, and buy and sell with, as whom you make your intimate, or familiar friends. For such have both the advantage of their interest in your affections, and also the advantage of their nearness and familiarity; and, if they have but also the advantage of higher abilities than you, they may be powerful instruments of your good or hurt. If you have a familiar friend, that will defend you from error, and help you against temptations, and lovingly reprove your sin, and feelingly speak of God, and the life to come, inditing his discourse from the inward power of faith, and holy experience; the benefit of such a friend may be more to you, than of the learnedest or greatest in the world. How sweetly will their speeches relish of the Spirit from which they come! How deeply may they pierce a careless heart! How powerfully may they kindle in you, a love and zeal to God and his commandments! How seasonably may they discover a temptation, prevent your fall, reprove an error, and recover your souls! How faithfully will they watch over you! How profitably will they provoke, and put you on; and pray with you fervently when you are cold; and mind you of the truth, and duty, and mercy, which you forget! It is a very great mercy to have a judicious, solid, and faithful companion in the way to heaven.

But if your ears are daily filled with froth and folly, with ribaldry, or idle stories, with oaths and curses, with furious words, or scorns and jeers against the godly, or with the sophistry of deceivers, is it likely this should leave a pleasant, or wholesome relish on your minds? Is it likely that the effect should not be seen, in your lean or leprous hearts and lives, as well as the effects of an infected, or unwholesome air or diet, will be seen upon your diseased bodies? He is ungodly, that liketh such company best: and he is proud and presumptuous, that will unnecessarily cast himself upon it, in confidence that he shall receive no hurt: and he is careless of himself, that will not cautiously avoid it: and few that long converse with such, come off without

invicem studiorum similitudo conciliet, posse consistere. Porro amicitiam ipsam societatem quandam esse dicunt omnium, quæ sunt ad vitam necessaria, cum amicis ut nobis ipsis utamur: atque propter seipsum amicum eligendum pronuntiant, amicorumque multitudinem inter expetenda ponunt: inter malos non posse constare amicitiam. Laert. in Zenone, lib. vii. segm. 124. p. 443.

some notable loss; except when we live with such, as Lot did in Sodom, grieving for their sin and misery; or, as Christ conversed with publicans and sinners, with a holy zeal and diligence to convert and save them; or, as those that have not liberty, who bear that which they have not power to avoid.

Among the rest, your danger is not least from them that are eager to proselyte you to some party, or unsound opinion. That they think they are in the right, and that they do it in love, and that they think it necessary to your salvation, and that truth and godliness are the things which they profess,—all this makes the danger much greater to you, if it be not truth and godliness indeed, which they propose and plead for. And none are in more danger than the ungrounded and unexperienced, that yet are so wise in their own esteem, as to be confident that they know truth from error, when they hear it, and are not afraid of any deceit, nor much suspicious of their own understandings. But of this before.

The like danger there is of the familiar company of lukewarm ones, or the profane. At first, you may be troubled at their sinful or unsavoury discourse, and make some resistance against the infection; but, before you are aware, it may so cool and damp your graces, as will make your decay discernible to others! First, you will hear them with less offence; and then, you will grow indifferent what company you are in; and then, you will laugh at their sin and folly; and then, you will begin to speak as they; and then, you will grow cold and seldomer in prayer, and other holy duties; and, if God prevent it not, at last, your judgments will grow blind, and you will think all this allowable.

But of all bad company, the nearest is the worst. If you choose such into your families, or into your nearest, conjugal relations, you cast water upon the fire; you imprison yourselves in such fetters, as will gall and grieve you, if they do not stop you; you choose a life of constant, close, and great temptations: whereas, your grace, and comfort, and salvation, might be much promoted, by the society of such as are wise, and gracious, and suitable to your state. To have a constant companion to open your heart to, and join with in prayer, and edifying conference, and faithfully

help you against your sins, and yet to be patient with you in your frailties, is a mercy, which worldlings neither deserve nor value.

Direct. xvi. ' Make careful choice of the books which you read. Let the Holy Scriptures ever have the pre-eminence, and next them, the solid, lively, heavenly treatises, which best expound and apply the Scriptures; and next those, the credible histories, especially of the church, and tractates upon inferior sciences and arts: but take heed of the poison of the writings of false teachers, which would corrupt your understandings: and of vain romances, play-books, and false stories, which may bewitch your fantasies, and corrupt your hearts.'

As there is a more excellent appearance of the Spirit of God in the Holy Scriptures, than in any other book whatever, so it hath more power and fitness to convey the Spirit, and make us spiritual, by imprinting itself upon our hearts. As there is more of God in it, so it will acquaint us more with God, and bring us nearer him, and make the reader more reverent, serious, and divine. Let Scripture be first and most in your hearts and hands, and other books be used as subservient to it. The endeavours of the devil and Papists to keep it from you, doth shew that it is most necessary and desirable to you. And when they tell you, that all heretics plead the Scripture, they do but tell you, that it is the common rule or law of Christians, which, therefore, all are fain to pretend: as all lawyers and wranglers plead the laws of the land, be their cause never so bad, and yet the laws must not be therefore concealed or cast aside: and they do but tell you, that, in their concealment or dishonouring the Scriptures, they are worse than any of those heretics. When they tell you, that the Scriptures are misunderstood, and abused, and perverted to maintain men's errors, they might also desire that the sun might be obscured, because the purblind do mistake, and murderers and robbers do wickedly by its light: and that the earth might be subverted, because it bears all evil-doers: and highways stopp'd up, because men travel in them to do evil: and food prohibited, because it nourisheth men's diseases. And when they have told you truly of a law or rule (whether made by pope or council), which bad men cannot misunderstand or

break, or abuse and misapply, then hearken to them, and prefer that law, as that which preventeth the need of any judgment.

The writings of Divines are nothing else but a preaching the Gospel to the eye, as the voice preacheth it to the ear. Vocal preaching hath the pre-eminence in moving the affections, and being diversified according to the state of the congregations which attend it: this way the milk cometh warmest from the breast. But books have the advantage in many other respects: you may read an able preacher, when you have but a mean one to hear. Every congregation cannot hear the most judicious or powerful preachers; but every single person may read the books of the most powerful and judicious. Preachers may be silenced or banished, when books may be at hand: books may be kept at a smaller charge than preachers: we may choose books which treat of that very subject which we desire to hear of; but we cannot choose what subject the preacher shall treat of. Books we may have at hand every day and hour; when we can have sermons but seldom, and at set times. If sermons be forgotten, they are gone. But a book we may read over and over until we remember it; and, if we forget it, may again peruse it at our pleasure, or at our leisure. So that good books are a very great mercy to the world. The Holy Ghost chose the way of writing, to preserve his doctrine and laws to the church, as knowing how easy and sure a way it is of keeping it safe to all generations, in comparison of mere verbal tradition, which might have made as many controversies about the very terms, as there be memories or persons to be the preservers and reporters.

Books are (if well chosen) domestic, present, constant, judicious, pertinent, yea, and powerful sermons: and always of very great use to your salvation: but especially when vocal preaching faileth, and preachers are ignorant, ungodly, or dull, or when they are persecuted, and forbid to preach.

You have need of a judicious teacher at hand, to direct you what books to use or to refuse. For among good books there are some very good that are sound and lively: and some are good, but mean, and weak, and somewhat dull: and some are very good in part, but have mixtures of error, or else of

incautious, injudicious expressions, fitter to puzzle than edify the weak. I am loath to name any of these latter sorts (of which abundance have come forth of late): but to the young beginner in religion, I may be bold to recommend (next to a sound catechism) Mr. Rutherford's Letters;—Mr. Robert Bolton's Works;—Mr. Perkins's;—Mr. Whateley's;—Mr. Ball, of Faith;—Dr. Preston's;—Dr. Sibbs's;—Mr. Hildersham's;—Mr. Pink's Sermons;—Mr. Jos. Rogers's;—Mr. Rich. Allen's;—Mr. Gurnall's;—Mr. Swinnock's;—Mr. Jos. Simonds's. And to establish you against Popery, Dr. Challoner's Codex Credo Eccles. Cathol.;—Dr. Field, of the Church;—Dr. White's Way to the Church, with the Defence;—Bishop Usher's Answer to the Jesuit; and Chillingworth, with Drelincourt's Summary. And for right principles about Redemption, &c. Mr. Truman's Great Propitiation; and of Natural and Moral Impotency;—and Mr. William Fenner, of Wilful Impenitency;—Mr. Hotchkis, of Forgiveness of Sin. To pass by many other excellent ones, that I may not name too many.

To a very judicious, able reader, who is fit to censure all he reads, there is no great danger in reading the books of any seducers: it doth but shew him how little and thin a cloak is used to cover a bad cause. But, alas! young soldiers, not used to such wars, are startled at a very sophism, or at a terrible threatening of damnation to dissenters (which every censorious sect can use), or at every confident, triumphant boast, or at every thing that hath a fair pretence of truth or godliness. Injudicious persons can answer almost no deceiver which they hear: and when they cannot answer them they think they must yield, as if the fault were not in them but in the cause, and as if Christ had no wiser followers, or better defenders of his truth than they. Meddle not, therefore, with poison, till you better know how to use it, and may do it with less danger, as long as you have no need.

As for play-books, and romances, and idle tales, I have already shewed in my "Book of Self-Denial," how pernicious they are, especially to youth, and to frothy, empty, idle wits, that know not what a man is, nor what he hath to do in the world. They are powerful baits of the devil, to keep more necessary things out of their minds, and better

books out of their hands, and to poison the mind so much the more dangerously, as they are read with more delight and pleasure: and to fill the minds of sensual people with such idle fumes, and intoxicating fancies, as may divert them from the serious thoughts of their salvation: and which is no small loss) to rob them of abundance of that precious time, which was given them for more important business; and which they will wish and wish again at last that they had spent more wisely. I know the fantasticks will say, that these things are innocent, and may teach men much good (like him that must go to a whore-house to learn to hate uncleanness; and him that would go out with robbers to learn to hate thievery): but I shall now only ask them as in the presence of God, 1. Whether they should spend that time no better? 2. Whether better books and practices would not edify them more. 3. Whether the greatest lovers of romances and plays be the greatest lovers of the book of God, and of a holy life? 4. Whether they feel in themselves that the love of these vanities, doth increase their love to the Word of God, and kill their sin, and prepare them for the life to come? or clean contrary? And I would desire men not to prate against their own experience and reason, nor to dispute themselves into damnable impetuosity, nor to befool their souls by a few silly words, which any but a sensualist may perceive to be mere deceit and falsehood. If this will not serve, they shall be shortly convinced and answered in another manner.

Direct. xvii. 'Take heed that you receive not a doctrine of libertinism as from the Gospel; nor conceive of Christ as an encourager of sin: nor pretend free grace for your carnal security or sloth: for this is but to set up another Gospel, and another Christ, or rather the doctrine and works of the devil against Christ and the Gospel, and to turn the grace of God into wantonness.'

Because the devil knoweth that you will not receive his doctrine in his own name, his usual method is, to propound and preach it in the name of Christ, which he knoweth you reverence and regard. For, if satan concealed not his own name and hand in every temptation, it would spoil his game, and the more excellent and splendid is his pretence, the more powerful the temptation is^t. They that gave heed to

^t *Ego, si qui, judices, hoc robere animi, atque hac indole virtutis ac continentiae*

seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, no doubt thought better of the spirits and the doctrines, especially seeming strict (for the devil hath his strictnesses), “as forbidding to marry, and abstinence from meats which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving.” But the strictnesses of the devil are always intended to make men loose. They shall be strict as the Pharisees in traditions and vain ceremonies, and building the tombs of the prophets, and garnishing the sepulchres of the righteous, that they may hate and murder the living saints that worship God in spirit and in truth. Licentiousness is the proper doctrine of the devil, which all his strictness tendeth to promote. To receive such principles is pernicious: but to father them upon Christ and the Gospel is blasphemous.

The Libertines, Antinomians, and Autonomians of this age, have gathered you too many instances. The Libertine saith, “The heart is the man; therefore you may deny the truth with your tongue, you may be present at false worship, (as at the Mass,) you need not suffer to avoid the speaking of a word, or subscribing to an untruth or error, or doing some little thing; but, so long as you keep your hearts to God, and mean well, or have an honest mental reservation, and are forced to it by others, rather than suffer, you may say, or subscribe, or swear any thing which you can yourselves put a lawful sense upon in your own minds, or comply with any outward actions or customs to avoid offence and save yourselves.”

The Antinomians tell you, that “The moral law is abrogated, and that the Gospel is no law; (and if there be no law, there is no governor or government, no duty, no sin, no judgment, no punishment, no reward;) that the elect are justified before they are born, or repent, or believe; that their sin is pardoned before it is committed, that God took them as suffering and fulfilling all the law in Christ, as if it had been they that did it in him: that we are justified by faith only in our consciences: that justifying faith is but

fuit, ut respueret omnes voluptates, omnemque vitæ suæ cursum conficeret: quem non quies, non remissio, non æqualium studia, non ludi, non convivia delectarent; nihil in vita expetendum putaret, nisi quod esset cum laude et cum dignitate conjunctum: hunc mea sententia divinis quibusdam bonis instructum atque ornatum puto
 ~ . pro M. Col. 39. Op. vol. iii. p. 1054.

the believing that we are justified : that every man must believe that he is pardoned, that he may be pardoned in his conscience ; and this he is to do by a Divine faith, and that this is the sense of the article, ‘ I believe the forgiveness of sins,’ that is, that my sins are forgiven ; and that all are forgiven that believe it : that it is legal and sinful to work or do any thing for salvation : that sin once pardoned need not be confessed and lamented, or at least we need not ask pardon of sin daily, or of one sin oft : that castigations are no punishments ; and yet no other punishment is threatened to believers for their sins ; and, consequently, that Christ hath not procured them a pardon of any sin after believing, but prevented all necessity of pardon : and therefore they must not ask pardon of them, nor do any thing to obtain it : that fear of hell must have no hand in our obedience, or restraint from sin. And some add, that he that cannot repent or believe, must comfort himself that Christ repented and believed for him : (a contradiction.)” Many such doctrines of licentiousness the abusers of grace have brought forth*.

And the sect which imitateth the father of pride in affecting to be from under the government of God, and to be the law-givers and rulers of themselves and all others (which I therefore call the Autonomians), are licentious and much more. They equally contend against Christ’s government, and for their own. They fill the world with wars and bloodshed, oppression, and cruelty ; and the ears of God with the cries of the martyrs and oppressed ones ; and all that the spiritual and holy discipline of Christ may be suppressed, and seriousness in religion made odious, or banished from the earth, and that themselves may be taken for the center, and pillars, and law-givers of the church, and the consciences of all men may be taught to cast off all scruples or fears of offending God, in comparison of offending them ; and may absolutely submit to them ; and never stick at any feared disobedience to Christ. They are the scorers and persecutors of strict obedience to the laws of God, and take those that fear his judgments to be men affrighted out of their wits ; and that to obey him exactly (which, alas ! who

* For sound principles in these points, read Mr. Gibbon’s Sermon on Justification, in the Morning Exercises at St. Giles’s ; and Mr. Truman’s two books before named, and *Le Blank’s Theses in Latin*, with *Thes. Salmaricus*, &c.

can do that doeth his best) is but to be hypocritical or too precise : but to question their domination, or break their laws (imposed on the world, even on kings and states without any authority), this must be taken for heresy, schism, or a rebellion like that of Corah and his company. This luciferian spirit of the proud Autonomians hath filled the Christian world with bloodshed, and been the greatest means of the miseries of the earth, and especially of hindering and persecuting the Gospel, and setting up a Phari-saical religion in the world : it hath fought against the Gospel, and filled with blood, the countries of France, Savoy, Rhætia, Bohemia, Belgia, Helvetia, Polonia, Hungary, Germany, and many more : that it may appear how much of the satanical nature they have, and how punctually they fulfil his will.

And natural corruption containeth in it, the seeds of all these damnable heresies : nothing more natural to lapsed man, than to shake off the government of God, and to become a lawgiver to himself, and as many others as he can ; and to turn the grace of God into wantonness. Therefore the profane, that never heard it from any heretics but themselves, do make themselves such a creed as this ; that “ God is merciful, and, therefore, we need not fear his threatenings, for he will be better than his word : it belongeth to him to save us, and not to us, and, therefore, we may cast our souls upon his care, though we care not for them ourselves. If he hath predestinated us to salvation, we shall be saved ; and if he have not, we shall not, whatever we do, or how well soever we live. Christ died for sinners, and therefore, though we are sinners, he will save us. God is stronger than the devil, and, therefore, the devil shall not have the most. That which pleaseth the flesh, and doth God no harm, can never be so great a matter, or so much offend him, as to procure our damnation. What need of so much ado to be saved, or so much haste to turn to God, when any one that at last doth but repent, and cry God mercy, and believe that Christ died for him, shall be saved ? Christ is the Saviour of the world, and his grace is very great and free ; and, therefore, God forbid that none should be saved but those few that are of strict and holy lives, and make so much ado for heaven. No man can know who shall be saved, and who shall not ;

and, therefore, it is the wisest way, to do nobody any harm, and to live merrily, and trust God with our souls, and put our salvation upon the venture; nobody is saved for his own works or deservings; and, therefore, our lives may serve the turn as well, as if they were more strict and holy." This is the creed of the ungodly; by which you may see how natural it is to them, to abuse the Gospel, and plead God's grace, to quiet and strengthen them in their sin, and to embolden themselves on Christ to disobey him.

But this is but to set Christ against himself: even his merits and mercies, against his government and Spirit: and to set his death, against the ends of his death: and to set our Saviour against our salvation: and to run from God and rebel against him, because Christ died to recover us to God, and to give us repentance unto life: and to sin, because he died to save his people from their sins, "and to purify a peculiar people to himself, zealous of good works^a." "He that committeth sin, is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil^b."

Direct. xviii. 'Watch diligently, both against the more discernible decays of grace, and against the degenerating of it into some carnal affections, or something counterfeit, and of another kind. And so also of religious duties.'

We are no sooner warmed with the celestial flames, but natural corruption is inclining us to grow cold: like hot water, which loseth its heat by degrees, unless the fire be continually kept under it. Who feeleth not that as soon as in a sermon, or prayer, or holy meditation, his heart hath got a little heat, as soon as it is gone, it is prone to its former earthly temper, and by a little remissness in our duty, or thoughts, or business about the world, we presently grow cold and dull again. Be watchful, therefore, lest it decline too far. Be frequent in the means that must preserve you from declining: when faintness telleth you that your stomach is emptied of the former meat, supply it with another, lest strength abate. You are rowing against the stream of fleshly interest and inclinations; and, therefore, intermit not too long, lest you go faster down by your ease, than you get up by your labour.

^a Matt. i. 21. Tit. ii. 14.

^b 1 John iii. 8. John viii. 44.

The degenerating of grace, is a way of backsliding, very common, and too little observed. It is, when good affections do not directly cool, but turn into some carnal affections somewhat like them, but of another kind. As, if the body of a man instead of dying, should receive the life or soul of a beast, instead of the reasonable, human soul. For instance: (1.) Have you believed in God, and in Jesus Christ, and loved them accordingly? You shall seem to do so still as much as formerly, when your corrupted minds have received some false representation of them; and so it is indeed another thing that you thus corruptly believe and love. (2.) Have you been fervent in prayer? You shall be fervent still. If satan can but corrupt your prayers, by corrupting your judgments or affections, and get you to think that to be the cause of God which is against him; and that to be against him, which he commandeth; and those to be the troublers of the church, which are its best and faithful members: turn but your prayers against the cause and people of God, by your mistake, and you may pray as fervently against them as you will. The same I may say of preaching, and conference, and zeal: corrupt them once, and turn them against God, and satan will join with you for zealous and frequent preaching, or conference, or disputes. (3.) Have you a confidence in Christ and his promise, for your salvation? Take heed lest it turn into carnal security, and a persuasion of your good estate, upon ill grounds, or you know not why. (4.) Have you the hope of glory? Take heed lest it turn into a careless venturousness of your soul, or the mere laying aside of fear, and cautious suspicion of yourselves. (5.) Have you a love to them that fear the Lord? Watch your hearts, lest it degenerate into a carnal, or a partial love. Many unheedful young persons, of different sexes, at first love each other with an honest, chaste, and pious love; but imprudently using too much familiarity, before they were well aware, it hath turned into a fleshly love, which hath proved their snare, and drawn them further into sin and trouble. Many have honoured them that fear the Lord, who insensibly have declined to honour only those of them that were eminent in wealth and worldly honour, or that were esteemed for their parts, or places by others, and little honoured the humble, poor, obscure Christians, who

were at least as good as they. Forgetting that the "things that are highly esteemed among men, are abomination in the sight of God;" and that God valueth not men by their places and dignities in the world; but by their graces and holiness of life. Abundance that at first did seem to love all Christians, as such, as far as any thing of Christ appeared in them, have first fallen into some sect, and over-admiring their party, and have set light by others as good as they, and censured them as unsound, and then withdrawn their special love, and confined it to their party, or to some few; and yet thought that they loved the godly as much as ever, when it was degenerate into a factious love. (6.) Are you zealous for God, and truth, and holiness, and against the sins and errors of others? Take heed lest you lose it, while you think it doth increase in you. Nothing is more apt to degenerate than zeal. In how many thousands hath it turned from an innocent, charitable, peaceable, tractable, healing, profitable, heavenly zeal, into a partial zeal for some party or opinions of their own? and into a fierce, censorious, uncharitable, scandalous, turbulent, disobedient, unruly, hurting and destroying zeal, ready to wish for fire from heaven, and kindling contention, confusion, and every evil work. Read well James iii. (7.) So, if you are meek or patient, take heed lest it degenerate into stupidity or contempt of those you suffer by. To be patient is not to be merely insensible of the affliction; but by the power of faith to bear the sense of it, as overruled by things of greater moment.

How apt men are to corrupt and debase all duties of religion, is too visible in the face of the far greatest part of the Christian world. Throughout both the Eastern and the Western churches, the Papists, the Greeks, the Armenians, the Abessines, and too many others, (though the essentials of religion through God's mercy are retained, yet) how much in the face of religion altered, from what it was in the days of the apostles! The ancient simplicity of doctrine, is turned into abundance of new or private opinions, introduced as necessary articles of religion, and alas, how many of them false! So that Christians being too proud to accept of the ancient test of Christianity, cannot now agree among themselves what a Christian is, and who is to be esteemed a

Christian; and so they deny one another to be Christians, and destroy their charity to each other, and divide the church, and make themselves a scorn by their divisions, to the infidel world; and thus the primitive unity, charity and peace, is partly destroyed, and partly degenerate into the unity, charity, and peace, of several sects among themselves. The primitive simplicity in government and discipline, is with most, turned into a forcible, secular government, exercised to advance one man above others, and to satisfy his will and lusts, and make him the rule of other men's lives, and to suppress the power and spirituality of religion in the world. The primitive simplicity of worship, is turned into such a mask of ceremony, and such a task of formalities and bodily exercise, that, if one of the apostolical Christians should come among them, he would scarce think that this is the same employment which formerly the church was exercised in, or scarce know religion, in this antic dress. So that the amiable, glorious face of Christianity, is so spotted and defiled, that it is hidden from the unbelieving world; and they laugh at it, as irrational, or think it to be but like their own. And the principal hindrance of the conversion of heathens, Mahometans, and other unbelievers is, the corruption and deformity of the churches that are near them, or should be the instruments of their conversion. And the most probable way to the conversion of those nations is, the true reformation of the churches both in East and West: which, if they were restored to the ancient spirituality, rationality, and simplicity of doctrine, discipline, and worship, and lived in charity, humility, and holiness, as those, whose hearts and conversations are in heaven, with all worldly glory and honour as under their feet; they would then be so illustrious and amiable in the eyes, even of heathens and other infidels, that many would flock into the church of Christ, and desire to be such as they: and their light would so shine before these men, that they would see their good works, and glorify their heavenly Father, and embrace their faith.

The commonest way of the degenerating of all religious duties, is into this dead formality, or lifeless image of religion. If the devil can but get you to cast off the spirituality and life of duty, he will give you leave to seem very devout,

and make much ado with outward actions, words and beads; and you shall have as much zeal for a dead religion, or the corpse of worship as will make you think that it is indeed alive. By all means take heed of this turning the worship of God into lip-service. The commonest cause of it is, a carnality of mind (fleshly men will think best of the most fleshly religion): or else a slothfulness in duty, which will make you sit down with the easiest part: it is the work of a saint, and a diligent saint, to keep the soul itself both regularly and vigorously employed with God. But to say over certain words by rote, and to lift up the hands and eyes is easy: and hypocrites that are conscious that they are void of the life and spirituality of worship, do think to make all up with this formality, and quiet their consciences and delude their souls with a handsome image. Of this I have spoken more largely, in a book called, "The Vain Religion of the Formal Hypocrite."

Yet run not here into the contrary extreme, as to think that the body must not worship God as well as the soul, or that the decent and edifying determination of the outward circumstances of religion, and the right ordering of worship, is a needless thing, or sinful; or that a form of prayer in itself, or when imposed, is unlawful; but let the soul and body of religion go together, and the alterable adjuncts be used, as things alterable, while the life of holiness is still kept up.

Direct. XIX. 'Promise not yourselves long life, or prosperity and great matters in the world, lest it entangle your hearts with transitory things, and engage you in ambitious or covetous designs, and steal away your hearts from God, and destroy all your serious apprehensions of eternity.'

Our own experience, and the alterations which the approach of death makes upon the most, do sensibly prove that the expectation of a speedy change, and reckoning upon a short life, do greatly help us in all our preparation, and in all the work of holiness through our lives. Come to a man that lieth on his death-bed, or a prisoner that is to die to-morrow, and try him with discourse of riches, or honours, or temptations to lust, or drunkenness, or excess; and he will think you are mad, or very impertinent, to tell him of such things. If he be but a man of common reason,

you shall see that he will more easily vilify such temptations, than many religious persons will do, in their prosperity and health. O how serious are we in repenting and perusing our former lives, and casting up our accounts, and asking, what we shall do to be saved, when we see that death is indeed at hand, and time is at an end, and we must away! Every sentence of Scripture hath then some life and power in it; every word of exhortation is savoury to us; every reproof of our negligence and sin, is then well taken; every thought of sin, or Christ, or grace, or eternity, goes then to the quick. Then time seems precious, and if you ask a man whether it be better spent in cards, and dice, and plays, and feasting, and needless recreations, and idleness, or in prayer, and holy conference, and reading and meditating on the Word of God and the life to come, and the holy use of our lawful labours! how easily will he be satisfied of the truth, and confute the cavils of voluptuous time-wasters! Then his judgment will more easily be in the right, than learning or arguments before could make it. In a word, the expectation of the speedy approach of the soul into the presence of the eternal God, and of our entering into an unchangeable, endless life of joy or torment, hath so much in it to awaken all the powers of the soul, that if ever we will be serious, it will make us serious, in every thought, and speech, and duty. And therefore as it is a great mercy of God, that this life, which is so short, should be as uncertain, and that frequent dangers and sicknesses call to us to look about us, and be ready for our change; so, usually, the sickly that look for death, are most considerate: and it is a great part of the duty of those that are in youth and health, to consider their frailty, and the shortness and uncertainty of their lives, and always live as those that wait for the coming of their Lord. And we have great reason for it, when we are certain it will be ere long; and when we have so many perils and weaknesses to warn us; and when we are never sure to see another hour; and when time is so swift, so quickly gone, so unrecoverable, and nothing when it is past. Common reason requireth such to live in a constant readiness to die.^d

^d Quamquam, O Dii boni! Quid est in hominis vita diu? da enim supremum tempus: expectemus Tartessiorum regis ætatem: fuit enim (ut scriptum video). Arganthonius quidam Gadibus, qui octoginta regnavit annos, centum et viginti vixit:

But, if youth or health do once make you reckon of living long, and make you put away the day of your departure, as if it were far off; this will do much to deceive and dull the best, and take away the power of every truth, and the life of every good thought and duty, and all will be apt to dwindle into customariness and form. You will hardly keep the faculties of the soul awake, if you do not think still of death and judgment, as near at hand. The greatest certainty of thy greatest change, and the greatest joy or misery for ever, will not keep our stupid hearts awake, unless we look at all as near, as well as certain! This is plain, in the common difference that we find among all men, between their thoughts of death, in health, and when they see indeed that they must presently die. They that in health could think and talk of death with laughter, or lightly, without any awakening of soul, when they come to die are oftentimes as much altered, as if they had never heard before that they are mortal. By which it is plain, that to live in the house of mirth is more dangerous, than to live in the house of mourning; and that the expectation of long life, is a grievous enemy to the operations of grace, and the safety of the soul.

And it is one of the greatest strengtheners of your temptations to luxury, ambition, worldliness, and almost every sin. When men think that they shall have many years leisure to repent, they are apt the more boldly to transgress: when they think that they have yet many years to live, it tempteth them to pass away time in idleness, and to loiter in their race, and trifle in all their work, and to overvalue all the pleasures, and honours, and shadows of felicity that are here below. He that hath his life in his house or land, or hath it for inheritance, will set more by it, and bestow more upon it, than if he thought he must go out of it the next year. To a man that thinks of living many years, the favour of great ones, the raising of his estate, and name, and family, and the accommodations and pleasings of his flesh, will seem great matters to him, and will do much with him, and will make self-denial a very hard work.

sed mihi ne diuturnum quidem quidquam videtur, in quo est aliquid extremum. Cum enim id advenit; tunc illud quod præterit, effluxit: tantum remanet, quod virtute, et recte factis consecutus sis. Horæ quidem cedunt, et dies, et menses, et anni: nec præteritum tempus umquam revertitur, nec quid sequatur, sciri potest. Cic. Sen. 69. vol. vii. p. 813.

Therefore, though health be a wonderful great mercy, as enabling him to duty that hath a heart to use it to that end; yet it is by accident a very great danger and snare to the heart itself, to turn it from the way of duty. The best life for the soul is, that which least endangereth it by being over-pleasing to the body, and in which the flesh hath the smallest interest to set up and plead against the Spirit. Not but that the largest stock must be accepted, and used for God, when he trusteth us with it; for when he setteth us the hardest work, we may expect his greatest help. But a dwelling as in tents, in a constant unsettledness, in a moveable condition, having little, and needing little, never feeling any thing in the creature to tempt us to say, "Soul take thy rest;" this is, to most, the safest life, which giveth us the freest advantages for heaven.

Take heed, therefore, as you love your souls, of falling into the snare of worldly hopes, and laying designs for rising, and riches, and pleasing yourselves in the thoughts and prosecution of these things, for then you are in the readiest way to perdition; even to idolatrous worldliness, and apostasy of heart from God, and opening a door to every sin, that seems but necessary to your worldly ends; and to odious hypocrisy for a cloak to all this, and to quiet your guilty minds with something that is like religion. When once you are saying with worldly security, as he, Luke xii. 18, 19. "I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry:" you are then be-fooling yourselves, and near being called away, as fools, by death, verses 20, 21. And when, without a sense of the uncertainty of your lives, you are saying, as those in James iv. 13, 14. "To-day, or to-morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy, and sell, and get gain; whereas you know not what shall be on the morrow:" You forget what your lives are, that they are "a vapour, appearing a little while, and then vanishing away," verse 14. "Boast not thyself therefore of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth^e."

Direct. xx. 'See that your religion be purely divine,

^e Prov. xxvii. 1.

and animated all by God, as the beginning, the way, and the end ; and that first upon thy soul, and then upon all that thou hast or dost, there be written “ HOLINESS TO THE LORD : ” and that thou corrupt not all with an inordinate, hypocritical respect to man ^f .

To be holy, is to be divine, or devoted to God, and appropriated to him, and his will, and use ; and that our hearts and lives be not common and unclean. To be godly, is to live to God ; as those that from their hearts believe, that he is God indeed, and that “ he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him,” that he is “ our God all-sufficient, our shield and exceeding great reward ^g . ” “ And that of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things ^h , ” that all may give the glory for ever unto him. As God is infinitely above all creatures, so living upon God and unto God, must needs advance us above the highest sensual life : and therefore religion is transcendently above all sciences or arts. So much of God as is in you and upon you, so much you are more excellent than the highest worldly perfection can advance you to. God should be the first, and last, and all in the mind, and mouth, and life of a believer. God must be the principal matter of your religion. The understanding and will must be exercised upon him. When you awake you should be still with him ⁱ . Your meditations of him should be sweet, and you should be glad in the Lord. Yet, creatures under him, may be the frequent, less principal matter of your religion ; but still as referred unto him. God must be the author of your religion : God must institute it, if you expect he should accept it and reward it. God must be the rule of your religion, as revealing his will concerning it in his Word. God must be the ultimate end of your religion : it must be intended to please and glorify him. God must be the continual motive and reason of your religion, and of all you do : you must be able truly to fetch your reason

^f De bonis et malis ita disserebat Plato : Finem esse, Deo similem fieri. Virtutem sufficere quidem ad bene beateque vivendum : cæterum instrumentis indigere, corporis bonis ; robore, sanitate, integritate sensuum, et cæteris id genus. Exterioribus item, puta opibus, generis claritate, gloria. Ea et si non affuerint, nihilominus tamen beatum fore sapientem. Arbitratur et Deos humana cernere atque curare, et dæmones esse. Porro in dialogis justitiam divinam legem arbitratus est, ut ad iuste agendum potentius persuaderet, nè post mortem pœnas improbi luerent. Laert. in Plat. lib. iii. sect. 78, 79. pp. 213, 214.

^g Heb. xi. 6. Gen. xv. 1. xvii. 1.

^h Rom. xi. 36.

ⁱ Psal. cxxxix. 18.

from heaven, and to say, 'I do it because it is his will; I do it to please, and glorify, and enjoy him.' God must be taken as the sovereign Judge of your religion, and of you, and of all you do: and you must wholly look to his justification and approbation, and avoid whatever he condemneth. Can you take God for your Owner, your Sovereign, your Saviour, your sufficient Protector, your Portion, your all? If not, you cannot be godly, nor be saved. If his authority have not more power upon you, than the authority of the greatest upon earth, you are atheistical hypocrites, and not truly religious, whatever you pretend. If "HOLINESS TO THE LORD," be written upon you, and all that is your's, you are devoted to him, as his own peculiar ones. If your names be set upon your sheep, or plate, or clothes, you will say, if another should take them, 'They are mine; do you not see my mark upon them?' Slavery to the flesh, the world, and the devil, is the mark that is written upon the ungodly (upon the foreheads of the profane, and upon the hearts of hypocrites and all): and satan, the world, and the flesh have their service. If you are consecrated to God, and bear his name and mark upon you, tell every one that would lay claim to you, that you are his, and resolved to live to him, to love him, to trust him, and to stand or fall to him alone. Let God be the very life, and sense, and end of all you do.

When once man hath too much of your regard and observation, that you set too much by his favour and esteem, or eye him too much in your profession and practice; when man's approbation too much comforteth you, and man's displeasure or dispraise doth too much trouble you; when your fear, and love, and care, and obedience are too much taken up for man; you so far withdraw yourselves from God, and are becoming the servants of men, and friends of the world, and turning back to bondage, and forsaking your Rock and Portion, and your excellency: the soul of religion is departing from you, and it is dying and returning to the dust. And if once man get the pre-eminence of God, and be preferred and set above him, in your hearts or lives, and feared, trusted, and obeyed before him, you are then dead to God, and alive to the world; and, as men are taken for your gods, you must take up with such a salvation as they can give you. If your alms and prayers are done to be seen

of men, and to procure their good thoughts and words; if you get them, make your best of them; "for, verily," your Judge hath "said unto you, you have your reward¹."

Not that man is absolutely to be contemned or disregarded. No; under God, your superiors must be obeyed; you must do wrong to none, and do good to all, as far as in you lieth; you must avoid offence, and give good example, and, under God, have so much regard to men, as to "become all things to all men, for their salvation." But if once you set them above their rank, and turn yourselves to an inordinate dependance on them, and make too great a matter of their opinion or words concerning you, you are losing your godliness or divine disposition; and turning it into man-pleasing and hypocrisy^m. When man stands in competition with God, for your first and chief regard, or in opposition to him, or a sharer in co-ordination with him, and not purely in subordination to him, he is to be numbered with things to be forsaken. Even good men, whom you must love and honour, and whose communion and help you must highly value, yet may be made the object of your sin, and may become your snare. Your honouring of them, or love to them, must not entice you to desire inordinately to be honoured by them, nor cause you to set too much by their approbation. If you do, you will find that, while you are too much eyeing man, you are losing God, and corrupting your religion at the very heart. And you may fall among those, that, how holy soever, may have great mistakes in matters of religion, tending to much sin, and may be somewhat censorious against those that are not of their mind; and so the retaining of their esteem, and the avoiding of their censures, may become one of the greatest temptations of your lives. And you will find, that man-pleasing is a very difficult, and yet unprofitable task. Love Christ, as he appeareth in any of his servants, and be followers of them, as they are followers of Christ, and regard their approbation as it agreeth with Christ's; but O! see that you

¹ Matt. vi. 1—3.

^m Igitur alte spectare si voles, atque hanc sedem, et æternam domum contueri: neque te sermonibus vulgi dederis, nec in præmiis humanis spem posueris rerum tuarum: suis te oportet illecebris ipsa virtus trahat ad verum decus. Cic. Somn. Scip. 7. op. vol. vii. p. 918. Hæc cœlestia semper spectato: illa humana contemnit. Id. Ibid. p. 917.

are able to live upon the favour of God alone, and to be quieted in his acceptance, though man despise you ; and to be pleased, so far as God is pleased, though man be displeased with you ; and to rejoice in his justification, though men condemn you with the most odious slanders, and the greatest infamy, and cast out your names as evil doers. See that God be taken as enough for you, or else you take him not as God : even as enough without man, and enough against man ; that you may be able to say, “ If God be for us, who can be against us ? Who is he that condemneth ? it is God that justifieth^a. ” “ Do I seek to please men ? For if I yet pleased men, I should not be a servant of Christ^o. ” “ Thus saith the Lord ; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord. For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh.—Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green ; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit^p. ” “ Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils : for wherein is he to be accounted of^q ? ”

Having given you these Directions, I must tell you in the conclusion, that they are like food, that will not nourish you by standing on your table ; or, like physic, that will not cure you by standing in the box : they must be taken and digested, or you will find none of the benefit. It is not the reading of them, that will serve the turn to so great use, as the safe proceeding and confirmation of beginners, or novices in religion : it will require humility to perceive the need of them ; and labour to learn, digest, and practice them. Those slothful souls, that will refuse the labour, must bear the sad effects of their negligence : there is not one of all these Directions, as to the matter of them, which can be spared. Study them, understand them, and remember them, as things that must be done. If either a senselessness of your necessity, or a conceit that the Spirit must

^a Rom. viii. 31. 33, 34.

^o Gal. i. 10.

^p Jer. xvii. 5—8.

^q Isa. ii. 22.

do it, without so much labour and diligence of your own, do prevail with you, to put off all these with a mere approbation, the consequent may be sadder than you can yet foresee. Though I suppose you to have some beginnings of grace; I must tell you, that it will be, comparatively, a sad kind of life, to be erroneous, and scandalous, and troublesome to the church, or full of doubts, and fears, and passions, and to be burdensome to others and yourselves! Yea, it is reason that you be very suspicious of your sincerity, if you desire not to increase in grace, and be not willing to use the means, which are necessary to your increase. He is not sincere, that desireth not to be perfect: and he desireth not sincerely, who is not willing to be at the labour and cost, which is necessary to the obtaining of the thing desired. I beseech you, therefore, as you love the happiness of prudent, strong, and comfortable Christians, and would escape the misery of those grievous diseases, which would turn your lives into languishing, unserviceableness, and pain; that you seriously study these Directions, and get them into your minds, and memories, and hearts; and let the faithful practice of them be your greatest care, and the constant employment of your lives.

CHAPTER III.

The General Grand Directions for Walking with God, in a Life of Faith and Holiness: containing the Essentials of Godliness and Christianity.

I AM next to direct you in that exercise of grace, which is common to all Christians. Habits are for use: grace is given you, not only that you may have it, but also that you may use it. And it is fit that we direct you how to use it, before we direct you how to know that you have it; because it is grace in exercise that you must discern; and habits are not perceived in themselves, but by their acts: and the more lively and powerful the exercise is, the more easily is grace perceived: so that this is the nearest and surest way

to a certainty of our own sincerity :—he that useth grace most and best, hath most grace ; and he that hath most, and useth it most, may most easily be assured that he hath it in sincerity and truth.

In these Directions, I shall begin with those great internal duties, in which the very life of all religion doth consist ; and the general practice of these principles and graces : and all these generals shall be briefly set together, for the easiness of understanding and remembering them. And then I shall give you such particular Directions, as are needful, in subordination to those generals.

Grand Direction 1. ‘ Labour to understand well the nature, grounds, reason, and order of faith and godliness : and to believe upon such grounds, so well understood, as will not suffer you to stagger, or entertain a contrary belief.’

Ignorance and ungrounded, or ill-grounded persuasions in matters of religion, are the cause that abundance of people delude themselves, with the empty name and dead profession of a faith and religion which they never were indeed possessors of. I know there are low degrees of knowledge, comparatively, in many that are true believers : and that there may be much love and holiness, where knowledge is very small or narrow, as to the objective extent of it : and that there is a knowledge that puffeth up, while charity edifieth : and that in many that have the narrower knowledge, there may be the fastest faith and adherence to the truth, which will conquer in the time of trial. But yet I must tell you, that the religion which you profess, is not, indeed, your own religion, if you know not what it is, and know not in some measure the true grounds and reasons why you should be of that religion. If you have only learned to say your creed, or repeat the words of Christian doctrine, while you do not truly understand the sense ; or if you have no better reasons why you profess the Christian faith, than the custom of the country, or the command of princes or governors, or the opinion of your teachers, or the example of your parents, friends, or neighbours, you are not Christians indeed. You have a human belief or opinion, which objectively is true ; but subjectively in yourselves, you have no true, divine belief. I confess, there may be some insufficient, yea, and erroneous reasons, which a

true believer may mistakingly make use of, for the proof of certain fundamental truths; but then that same man hath some other reason for his reception of that truth, which is more sound: and his faith is sound, because of those sound, infallible principles, though there be a mixture of some other reasons that are unsound. The true believer buildeth on the rock, and giveth deep rooting to the holy seed*. Though some deluded men may tell you, that faith and reason are such enemies, that they exclude each other as to the same object, and that the less reason you have to prove the truth of the things believed, the stronger and more laudable is your faith; yet, when it cometh to the trial, you will find, that faith is no unreasonable thing; and that God requireth you to believe no more, than you have sufficient reason for, to warrant you, and bear you out; and that your faith can be no more, than is your perception of the reasons why you should believe; and that God doth suppose reason, when he infuseth faith, and useth reason in the use of faith. They that believe, and know not why, or know no sufficient reason to warrant their belief, do take a fancy, an opinion, or a dream for faith. I know that many honest hearted Christians are unable to dispute for their religion, or to give to others a satisfactory account of the reasons of their faith or hope; but yet they have the true apprehension of some solid reasons in themselves; and they are not Christians they know not why: and though their knowledge be small as to the number of propositions known, yet it doth always extend to all that is essential to Christianity and godliness, and they do not believe they know not what: and their knowledge is greater intensively, and in its value and operation, than the knowledge of the most learned ungodly man in the world.

Though I may not here digress, or stay so long, as largely to open to you the nature, grounds, reason, and method of faith and godliness which I am persuading you to understand, yet I shall first lay before you a few propositions, which will be useful to you, when you are inquiring into these things, and then a little open them unto you.

Prop. 1. A life of godliness is our living unto God as God, as being absolutely addicted to him.

2. A life of faith is a living upon the unseen, everlasting

* Matt. vii. 24. xiii. 5—8.

happiness as purchased for us by Christ (with all the necessities thereto), and freely given us by God.

3. The contrary life of sense and unbelief, is a living, in the prevalency of sense or flesh, to this present world, for want of such believing apprehensions of a better, as should elevate the soul thereto, and conquer the fleshly inclination to things present.

4. Though man in innocency, needing no Redeemer, might live to God without faith in a Redeemer; yet lapsed man is not only unable to redeem himself, but also unable to live to God without the grace of the Redeemer. It was not only necessary that he satisfy God's justice for us, that he may pardon and save us without any wrong to his holiness, wisdom, or government; but also that he be our teacher by his doctrine and his life, and that he reveal from heaven the Father's will, and that objectively in him we may see the wonderful, condescending love and goodness of a reconciled God and Father, and that effectually he illuminate, sanctify, and quicken us by the operations of his Word and Spirit, and that he protect and govern, justify, and glorify us; and be the Head of restored man, as Adam was the root of lapsed man, and as the lapsed spirits had their head: and therefore we must wholly live upon him as the Mediator between God and man, and the only Saviour by merit and by efficacy.

5. Faith is a knowledge by certain credible testimony or revelation from God, by means supernatural or extraordinary.

6. The knowledge of things naturally revealed (as the cause by the effect, &c.) is in order before the knowledge or belief of things revealed supernaturally.

7. It is matter of natural revelation that there is a God; that he is infinite in his immensity and eternity, in his power, wisdom, and goodness; that he is the first cause and ultimate end of all things; that he is the preserver and overruling disposer of all things, and the supreme governor of the rational world, and the great benefactor of all mankind, and the special favourer and rewarder of such as truly love him, seek him, and obey him: also that the soul of man is immortal; and that there is a life of reward or punishment to come, and that this life is but preparatory unto that: that

man is bound to love God his Maker, and serve him, with all his heart and might, and to believe that his labour is not vain : that we must do our best to know God's will, that we may do it. This, with much more, is of natural revelation, which infidels may know^b.

8. There is so admirable a concord and correspondency of natural divinity with supernatural, the natural leading towards the supernatural, and the supernatural falling in so meet where the natural endeth, or falls short, or is defective, that it greatly advantageth us in the belief of supernatural divinity^c. Nay, as the law of nature was exactly fitted to man in his natural innocent estate ; so the law and way of grace in Christ is so admirably and exactly fitted to the state of lapsed man for his recovery and salvation, that the experience which man hath of his sin and misery may greatly prepare him to perceive and believe this most suitable Gospel or doctrine of recovery. And though it may not be called natural, as if it were fitted to innocent nature, or as if it were revealed by natural, ordinary means, yet may it be so called, as it is exactly suited to the restoration of lapsed, miserable nature ; even as Lazarus's restored soul, though supernaturally restored, was the most natural associate of his body ; or as the bread, or milk, or wine, though it should fall from heaven, is in itself the most natural food for man.

9. The same things in divinity, which are revealed na-

^b Laertius saith of the Magi, that they did *Deorum vacare cultui : signa statuasque repudiare, et eorum in primis, qui mares esse Deos et fœminas dicunt, opinionem improbare*. *Proœmium*, sect. 6. p. 5. He saith also, that the said Magi held, and Theopompus with them, that men should live again, and become immortal. The like he saith of many other sects. It is a thing most irrational to doubt of the being of the unseen worlds, and the more excellent inhabitants thereof, when we consider that this low and little part of God's creation is so full of inhabitants. If a microscope will shew your very eyes a thousand visible creatures which you could never see without it, nor know that they had any being, will you not allow the pure intellectual sight to go much further beyond your microscope?

^c Thales' sayings in Laertius are, *Pulcherrimum, mundus ; à Deo enim factus est. Maximum, locus ; capit enim omnia. Velocissimum, mens ; nam per universa discurrit. Fortissimum, necessitas ; cuncta enim superat. Sapientissimum, tempus ; invenit namque omnia. Sciscitanti cuidam, utrum prius factum esset, nox an dies : nox ait, una prius die. Interrogatus, lateret ne Deos homo male agens : ne cogitans quidem, inquit. Interrogatus quidnam esse difficile ; se, inquit, ipsum noscere : quid contra facile ; alteri consilium dare. Quid suavissimam ; consequi quod velis. Quid Deus ; quod initio et fine caret. Diog. Laert. lib. i. sect. 35, 36. pp. 21, 22.*

turally to all, are again revealed supernaturally in the Gospel; and therefore may, and must be the matter both of natural knowledge and of faith.

10. When the malicious tempter casteth in doubts of a Deity, or other points of natural certainty, it so much discrediteth his suggestions, as may help us much to reject them when withal he tempteth us to doubt of the truth of the Gospel.

11. There are many needful appurtenances to the objects of a Divine faith, which are the matter of a human faith. (Of which more anon.)

12. Christ, as Mediator, is the way or principal means to God, as coming to restore man to his Maker. And so faith in Christ is but the means to bring us to the love of God (though in time they are commixed).

13. Knowledge and faith are the eye of the new creature, and love is in the heart: there is no more spiritual wisdom than there is faith; and there is no more life or acceptable qualification, or amiableness, than there is love to God.

14. All truths in divinity are revealed in order to a holy life: both faith and love are the principles and springs of practice.

15. Practice affordeth such experience to a believing soul, as may confirm him greatly in the belief of those supernatural revelations, which he before received without that help.

16. The everlasting fruition of God in glory being the end of all religion, must be next the heart and most in our eye, and must objectively animate our whole religion, and actuate us in every duty.

17. The pleasing of God being also our end, and both of these (enjoying him and pleasing him), being in some small foretastes attainable in this life, the endeavour of our souls and lives must be by faith to exercise love and obedience; for thus God is pleased and enjoyed.

18. All things in religion are fitted to the good of man, and nothing to his hurt: God doth not command us to honour him by any thing which would make us miserable, but by closing with, and magnifying his love and grace^d.

^d *Conjungi vult nos inter nos, atque connecti per mutua beneficia charitatis: adeo*

19. But yet it is his own revelation by which we must judge what is finally for our good or hurt; and we may not imagine that our shallow or deceivable wit is sufficient to discern without his Word what is best or worst for us: nor can we rationally argue from any present temporal adversity or unpleasing bitterness in the means, that 'This is worst for us, and therefore it is not from the goodness of God;' but we must argue in such cases, 'This is from the goodness and love of God, and therefore it is best.'

20. The grand impediment to all religion and our salvation, which hindereth both our believing, loving, and obeying, is the inordinate, sensual inclination to carnal self and present transitory things, cunningly proposed by the tempter to ensnare us, and divert and steal away our hearts from God and the life to come. The understanding of these Propositions will much help you in discerning the nature and reason of religion.

Grand Direct. II. 'Diligently labour in that part of the life of faith which consisteth in the constant use of Christ as the means of the soul's access to God, acceptance with him, and comfort from him: and think not of coming to the Father, but by him.'

To talk and boast of Christ is easy, and to use him for the increase of our carnal security, and boldness in sinning: but to live in the daily use of Christ to those ends of his office, to which he is by us to be made use of, is a matter of greater skill and diligence than many self-esteeming professors are aware of. What Christ himself hath done, or will do, for our salvation, is not directly the thing that we are now considering of; but what use he requireth us to make of him in the life of faith. He hath told us, that his flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed; and that except we eat his flesh and drink his blood, we have no life in us. Here is our use of Christ, expressed by eating and drinking his flesh and blood, which is by faith. The general parts of the work of redemption, Christ hath himself

ut tota justitia et præceptum hoc Dei, communis sit utilitas hominum. O miram clementiam Domini! O ineffabilem Dei benignitatem! præmium nobis pollicetur, si nos invicem diligamus; id est, si nos ea præstemus invicem, quorum vicissim indigemus: et nos superbo et ingrato animo, ejus remittimur voluntati, cujus etiam imperium beneficium est. Hieron. ad Celant. See my book of the "Reasons of the Christian Religion."

performed for us, without asking our consent, or imposing upon us any condition on our parts, without which he would not do that work : as the sun doth illustrate and warm the earth whether it will or not, and as the rain falleth on the grass without asking whether it consent or will be thankful ; so Christ, without our consent or knowledge, did take our nature, and fulfil the law, and satisfy the offended Law-giver, and merit grace, and conquer satan, death, and hell, and became the glorified Lord of all^e : but for the exercise of his graces in us, and our advancement to communion with God, and our living in the strength and joys of faith, he is himself the object of our duty, even of that faith which we must daily and diligently exercise upon him : and thus Christ will profit us no further than we make use of him by faith. It is not a forgotten Christ that objectively comforteth or encourageth the soul ; but a Christ believed in, and skilfully and faithfully used to that end. It is objectively (principally) that Christ is called our wisdom, 1 Cor. i. 30. The knowledge of him, and the mysteries of grace in him, is the Christian or Divine philosophy or wisdom, in opposition to the vain philosophy which the learned heathen boasted of. And therefore Paul determined to know nothing but Christ crucified, that is, to make ostentation of no other knowledge, and to glory in nothing but the cross of Christ, and so to preach Christ as if he knew nothing else but Christ^f. And it is objectively that Christ is said to dwell in our hearts by faith^g. Faith keepeth him still upon the heart by continual cogitation, application, and improvement : as a friend is said to dwell in our hearts whom we continually love and think of.

Christ himself teacheth us to distinguish between faith in God (as God), and faith in himself (as Mediator) : “ Let not your heart be troubled : ye believe in God^h.” (or, believe ye in God ?) “ believe also in me.” These set together are

^e Vel propter unionem inter creaturam et creatorem necessaria fuit incarnatio. Sicut in Divinitate una est essentia et tres personæ ; ita in Christo una persona et tres essentiæ ; Deitas, anima, et caro. Christus secundum naturam divinitatis est genitus ; secundum animam creatus ; et secundum carnem factus. Unio in Christo triplex est ; Deitatis ad animam ; Deitatis ad carnem ; et animæ ad carnem. Paul. Scaliger. Thes. p. 725. Christus solus, et quidem secundum utramque naturam dicitur Caput ecclesiæ. Id. p. 726.

^f See 1 Cor. i. 23. ii. 2. Gal. vi. 14. ^g Ephes. iii. 17. ^h John xiv. 1.

the sufficient cure of a troubled heart. It is not 'Faith in God, as God,' but 'Faith in Christ as Mediator,' that I am now to speak of: and that not as it is inherent in the understanding, but as it is operative on the heart and in the life: and this is not the smallest part of the life of faith, by which the just are said to live. Every true Christian must in his measure be able to say with Paul, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me¹." The pure Godhead is the beginning and the end of all. But Christ is "the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature; and by him all things were created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers, all things were created by him and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things do consist. And he is the head of the body, the church; who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence²." "In him it is that we who were sometime afar off are made nigh, even by his blood. For he is our peace, who hath reconciled both Jew and Gentile unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: and came and preached peace to them that were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have an access by one Spirit unto the Father: so that now we are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God³," "In him" it is "that we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in him⁴; he is the way, the truth, and the life: and no man cometh to the Father, but by him⁵." It is "by the blood of Jesus that we have boldness" (and liberty) "to enter into the holiest: by a new and living way which he hath consecrated for us through the vail, that is to say, his flesh." Because "we have so great a Priest over the house of God, we may draw near, with a true heart, in full assurance of faith⁶." "By him it is that we have access by faith into this grace wherein

¹ Gal. ii. 20.² Eph. iii. 12.³ Col. i. 16—19.⁴ John xiv. 6.⁵ Eph. ii. 13—18.⁶ Heb. x. 19—22.

we stand, and boast in hope of the glory of God^r." So that we must have "all our communion with God through him^a."

Supposing what I have said of this subject in my "Directions for a sound Conversion," Direct. 5., (which I hope the reader will peruse,) I shall here briefly name the uses which we must make of Christ by faith, in order to our holy converse with God^r. But I must tell you, that it is a doctrine which requireth a prepared heart, that hath life within to enable it to relish holy truth, and to dispose it to diligence, delight, and constancy in practice. A senseless reader will feel but little savour in it, and a sluggish reader, that suffereth it to die as soon as it hath touched his ears or fantasy, will fall short of the practice and the pleasure of this life. He must have faith that will live by faith: and he must have the heart and nature of a child, that will take pleasure in loving, reverent, and obedient converse with a father.

1. The darkness of ignorance and unbelief is the great impediment of the soul that desireth to draw near to God. When it knoweth not God, or knoweth not man's capacity of enjoying him, and how much he regardeth the heart of man; or knoweth not by what way he must be sought and found: or when he doubteth of the certainty of the word.

^p Rom. v. 1, 2.

^a Ex apostolica et veteri traditione, nemo baptizatur in ecclesia Christi, nisi prius rogatus, an credat in Deum Patrem, et in Jesum Christum Dei Filium, et in Spiritum sanctum, responderit, firmiter se credere: quantum vis ergo hebes sit, si judicium aliquid habet, et ita rogatur et ita respondet, prorsusque ita expresse credere jubetur: namque implicite et involutè non isthæc solum, sed quæcunque Divinæ literæ produunt, credit, de quibus tamen non omnibus interrogatur, quod ea expresse scire omnia illi minime opus sit. Acosta lib. v. c. 6. p. 461. Christian religion beginneth not at the highest, but the lowest: with Christ incarnate, teaching, dying, &c. Dr. Boy postil. p. 121. out of Luther.

^r Sane omnium virtutum radix et fundamentum fides est; quæ certantes adjuvat vincentes coronat, et cœlesti dono quosdam defectu signorum remunerat: nihil enim quod sinceræ fidei denegetur, quia nec aliud à nobis Deus, quam fidem exigit: hanc diligit, hanc requirit, huic cuncta promittit et tribuit. S. Eulogius Mart. Arch. Tele Memorial. Sanct. p. 4. Notandum, quod cum fides mortua sit præter opera, jam æque fides est: nam neque homo mortuus, homo est. Non enim sicut spiritum corpus meliorem, ita opera fidei præponenda sunt, quando gratia salvatur homo, non ex operibus sed ex fide: nisi fortè et hoc in quæstione sit, quod salvet fides quæ cum operibus propriis vivit; tanquam aliud genus operum sit, præter quæ salus ex fide proveniat nec autem sunt opera quæ sub umbra legis observantur. Didymus Alexand. in Jac. c. 4

which declareth the duty of the hopes of man; all this, or any of this, will suppress the ascending desires of the soul, and clip its wings, and break the heart of its holy aspirings after God, by killing or weakening the hopes of its success.

Here, then, make use of Jesus Christ, the great revealer of God and his will to the blind world, and the great confirmer of the Divine authority of his word. Life and immortality are brought more fully to light by the Gospel, than ever they were by any other means. Moses and the prophets did bring with their doctrine sufficient evidence of its credibility. But Christ hath brought both a fuller revelation, and a fuller evidence to help belief. An inspired prophet which proveth his inspiration to us, is a credible messenger; but when God himself shall come down into flesh, and converse with man, and teach him the knowledge of God, and the way to life, and tell him the mysteries of the world to come, and seal his testimony with unquestionable proofs, who will not learn of such a teacher? and who will deny belief to such a messenger, except absurd, unreasonable men? Remember then, when ignorance or unbelief would hinder your access to God, that you have the ablest teacher and the surest witness to acquaint you with God in all the world. If God had sent an angel from heaven, to tell you what he is, and what he requireth of you, and what he will do for you, would it not be very acceptable to you? But he hath done much more; he hath sent his Son^a: the Deity itself hath appeared in flesh: he that hath seen God, and he that is God, hath come among men to acquaint them with God: his testimony is more sure and credible than any angel's: "God who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in times past to the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken to us by his Son^b. No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him^c." We have "neither heard the voice of God, nor seen his shape^d. No man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God; he hath seen the Father^e. No man knoweth the Father save the

^a Dilectio Dei misit nobis salvatorem: cujus gratia salvati sumus: ut possideamus hanc gratiam, communicatio facit spiritus. Ambros. in 2 Cor. xiii. 13.

^b Heb. i. 1—3.

^c John i. 18.

^d John v. 37.

^e John vi. 46.

Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him^a." What more can we desire, that is short of the sight of the glory of God, than to have him revealed to us by a messenger from heaven, and such a messenger as himself hath seen him, and is God himself? Plato and Plotinus may describe God to us according to their dark conjectures: something we may discern of him by observing his works: but Christ hath declared what he saw, and what he knew beyond all possibility of mistake. And lest his own testimony should seem questionable to us, he hath confirmed it by a life of miracles, and by rising from the dead himself, and ascending visibly to heaven, and by the Holy Ghost, and his miraculous gifts which he gave to the messengers of his Gospel. Had it been no more than his resurrection from the dead, it had been enough to prove the utter unreasonableness of unbelief.

2. It is also a great impediment to the soul in its approach to God, that infinite distance disableth us to conceive of him aright. We say as Elihu, "Behold, God is great, and we know him not^a." And indeed it is impossible that mortal man should have any adequate apprehensions of his essence. But in his Son he hath come down to us, and shewed himself in the clearest glass that ever did reveal him. Think of him, therefore, as he appeared in our flesh: as he shewed himself in his holiness and goodness to the world. You may have positive thoughts of Jesus Christ: though you may not think that the Godhead was flesh, yet you may think of it as it appeared in flesh. It may quiet the understanding to conceive of God as incarnate, and to know that we cannot yet "know him as he is," or have any adequate conceptions of him: these may delight us till we reach to more.

3. It hindereth the soul's approach to God, when the infinite distance makes us think that God will not regard or take notice of such contemptible worms as we; we are ready to think that he is too high for our converse or delight. In this case the soul hath no such remedy, as to look to Christ; and we see how the Father hath regarded us, and set his heart upon us, and sent his Son to seek and save us. O wonderful, astonishing condescension of eternal

^a Matt. xi. 27.^a Job xxxiv. 26.

love ! Believe that God assumed flesh to make himself familiar with man ; and you can never question whether he regard us, or will hold communion with us.

4. It hindereth our comfortable access to God, when we are deterred by the glory of his infiniteness and majesty. As the eye is not able to gaze upon the sun unless it be overshadowed ; so the soul is afraid of the majesty of God and overwhelmed by it when it should be delighted in it. Against this there is no such remedy, as to behold God appearing to us in his Son, where his majesty is veiled and where he approacheth us familiarly in our communion, to invite us to him with holy confidence and reverent boldness. Christ did not appear in a terrible form : we durst discourse with him : beggars, and cripples, and diseased people durst ask his help : sinners durst eat with him. The proud contemned him, but the lowly were not frightened from him. He took upon him the “ form of a servant,” and made himself of no reputation, that he might converse familiarly with the meanest and those of no reputation. Though we may not debase the Godhead, to imagine that it is humbled in glory, as it was on earth, in the flesh of Christ ; yet this condescension is unspeakable encouragement to the soul to come with boldness unto God, that was frightened from him.

5. When the guilt of sin affrighteth us from God, and we are thinking that God will not accept such great offenders as we have been, then Christ is our remedy, who hath paid our debt, and borne our stripes, and procured and sealed us a pardon by his blood^b. Shall pardoned sins drive us from him that pardoned them ? He hath justified us by his righteousness. The curse and condemnation are terrible indeed ; but he hath taken them away, and given us a free discharge.

6. The infirmities also of our souls, in duty, are oftentimes a great discouragement to us, in our approaches to the most holy, jealous God. To find so little knowledge of God, so little love to him, such cold desires, such wandering and distracted thoughts, such dull requests : it is hard

^b O Domine Jesu doles non tua sed mea vulnera ! Ambros. de fide ad Grat. lib. ii. c. 3. Nos immortalitate male usi sumus ut moreremur : Christus mortalitate beatus unus est ut viveremus. August. de Doct. Christ. lib. i. c. 14.

to have lively and thankful apprehensions of God's acceptance of such defective, lame meditations or prayers ; but we are apt to think that he will abhor both them and us, and that he can take no pleasure in them, yea, that it is as good not to pray at all. Here faith hath full relief in Christ: two things it can say from him to encourage the fearful soul: (1.) That our acceptance with the Father is through the merits of his Son : and he is worthy, though we are unworthy. If we have but the worthiness of faith, and repentance, and sincere desire, Christ hath the worthiness of perfect holiness and obedience for us. We go not to the Father in our own names, but in his : and whatever we ask the Father in the name of Christ according to his will, he will give it us^c. (2.) That all the infirmities of our souls and services are forgiven us through Christ: he hath undertaken to answer for them all, and to justify us from all such accusations. By faith thou mayst, as it were, hear Christ thus speaking for thine encouragement: ' Go boldly, poor sinner, into my Father's presence: fear not the guilt of thy sins, nor the imperfection of thy prayers ; as long as thou truly repentest of them, and desirest to be delivered from them, and trustest in me, I am thy worthiness ; my righteousness is perfect without spot ; I have taken all thy faults and failings upon me : I have undertaken to answer for all the imperfections of thy holy things : sincerity is thy endowment ; perfection is mine: trust me in the performance of the trust which I have undertaken.'

7. Sometimes, the soul that would draw near to God, is overwhelmed with grief and terror, so that the sense of sin, and danger, and misery, do even distract men, and cast them into an agony ; so that they say with David, " My soul refused to be comforted : I remembered God and was troubled: I complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed. Thou holdest mine eyes waking: I am so troubled that I cannot speak^d." Yea, they think they feel God thrust them from him, and tell them that he hath utterly forsaken them. In this case, faith must look to Christ, and remember that he was in an agony when he prayed, and in a greater agony than ever you were, so that he sweat even drops of blood : and yet in that agony he prayed more earnestly^e. He him-

^c John xvi. 23. xiv. 13. xv. 16.

^d Psal. lxxvii. 2—4.

^e Luke xxii. 44.

self once cried out upon the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me:" and yet he was the beloved of the Father, and is now at his right hand in glory: and all this he did that we might not be forsaken. He hath removed the enmity: he hath reconciled us to God: by grief he passed himself to joy, and he will wipe away his servants' tears, and cause their griefs to end in joy.

8. Sometimes, the soul that would draw near to God, is molested with a storm of hideous temptations, and even confounded with a swarm of disordered, perplexed thoughts. Satan assaulteth it with temptations to despair, temptations to horrid blasphemous thoughts; temptations to entangle, intermit, corrupt, or pervert the duty which they are about; so that the soul is discouraged, overwhelmed, and broken with the inward assaults, and troubles, and distractions which it undergoeth. In this case, faith hath a Saviour suitable to our relief. It can look to him that was tempted in all points like as we are, without sin, and is now such an High Priest as can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; and, therefore, we may come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. "In all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest, in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people: for he himself having suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted^f." He submitted not only to be tempted by satan, but tempted in a wilderness, where he had no man to comfort him; and to be tempted to the most horrid blasphemy and wickedness, even to fall down and worship the devil himself; and he suffered the tempter violently to carry him to the pinnacle of the temple, Matt. iv. What should we think of ourselves, if we had been used thus? Should we not think that God had utterly forsaken us? He suffered himself to be tempted also by men: by the abuses and reproaches of his enemies; by the desertion of his followers; by the carnal counsel of Peter, persuading him to put by the death which he was to undergo. And he that made all temptations serve to the triumph of his patience, and conquering

^f Heb. iv. 14—16. ii. 17, 18.

power, will give the victory also to his grace, in the weakest soul.

9. It would be the greatest attractive to us to draw near to God, and make the thoughts of him pleasant to us, if we could but believe that he dearly loveth us, that he is reconciled to us, and taketh us for his children, and that he taketh pleasure in us, and that he resolveth for ever to glorify us with his Son, and that the dearest friend that we have in the world, doth not love us the thousandth part so much as he. And all this in Christ, is clearly represented to the eye of faith. All this is procured for believers, by him : and all this is given to believers in him. In him God is reconciled to us. He is our Father, and dwelleth among us, and in us and walketh in us, and is our God^s. Light and heat are not more abundant in the sun, than love is in Jesus Christ. To look on Christ, and not perceive the love of God, is as to look on the sun, and not to see and acknowledge its light. Therefore, whenever you find your hearts averse to God, and to have no pleasure in him, look then to Jesus, and observe in him the unmeasurable love of God : that you may be able to comprehend with all the saints, “ what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height ; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fulness of God^h.” Love and goodness are that to the will, which delicious sweetness is to the sensitive appetite. Draw near then, and taste the feast of love which God hath prepared and proposed by his Son. Dost thou not see or feel the love of God ? Come near, and look upon God incarnate ; upon a crucified Christ ; upon the Covenant sealed in his blood ; upon all the benefits of his Redemption ; upon all the privileges of the saints ; and upon the glory purchased, possessed, and promised by him. Put thy hand into his wounded side, and be not faithless, but believing and then thou wilt cry out, “ My Lord, and my God.”

10. So also, when the soul would fain perceive in itself the flames of love to God, it is the beholding of Christ by faith, which is the striking of fire, and the effectual means of kindling love. And this is the true approach to God, and the true communion and converse with him : so far as we

^s 2 Cor. vi. 16—18.

^h Ephes. iii. 18, 19.

love him, so far do we draw near him, and so far have we true communion with him. O what would the soul of a believer give, that it could but burn in love to God, as oft as in prayer, or meditation, or conference, his name and attributes are mentioned or remembered ! For this, there is no such powerful means, as believingly to look on Christ, in whom such glorious love appeareth, as will draw forth the love of all, that by a lively faith discern it. Behold the love that God hath manifested by his Son, and thou canst not but love him, who is the spring of this transcendent love. In the law, God sheweth his frowning wrath : and therefore it breedeth the “ spirit of bondage unto fear : ” but in Christ God appeareth to us, not only as loving us, but as love itself ; and therefore as most lovely to us, giving us the spirit of adoption, or of filial love, by which we fly, and cry to him as our Father.

11. The actual undisposedness and disability of the soul to prayer, meditation, and all holy converse with the blessed God, is the great impediment of our walking with him : and against this, our relief is all in Christ. He is filled with the Spirit, to communicate to his members : he can quicken us when we are dull : he can give us faith when we are unbelieving : he can give us boldness when we are discouraged : he can pour out upon us the Spirit of supplication, which shall help our infirmities, when we know not what to pray for as we ought. Beg of him then, the spirit of prayer : and look to his example, who prayed with strong cries and tears, and continued all the night in prayer, and spake a parable to this end, that we should always pray, and not wax faint. Call to him, and he that is with the Father will reach the hand of his Spirit to you, and will quicken your desires, and lift you up.

12. Sometimes, the soul is hearkening to temptations of unbelief, and doubting whether God observe our prayers, or whether there is so much to be got by prayer as we are told. In such a case faith must look to Christ, who hath not only commanded it, and encouraged us by his example ; but also made us such plentiful promises of acceptance with God, and the grant of our desires. Recourse to these promises will animate us to draw nigh to God.

13. Sometimes the present sense of our vileness, who are but

dust and despicable worms, doth discourage us, and weaken our expectations from God. Against this, what a wonderful relief is it to the soul, to think of our union with Christ, and of the dignity and glory of our Head! Can God despise the members of his Son? Can he trample upon them that are as his flesh and bone? Will he cut off, or forsake, or cast away the weakest parts of his body?

14. Sometimes, the guilt of renewed infirmities or decays doth renew distrust, and make us shrink; and we are like the child in the mother's arms, that feareth when he loseth his hold, as if his safety were more in his hold of her, than in her hold of him. Weak duties have weak expectations of success. In this case, what an excellent remedy hath faith, in looking to the perpetual intercession of Christ. Is he praying for us in the heavens, and shall we not be bold to pray, and expect an answer? O remember that he is not weak, when we are weak; and that it concerneth us, that he prayeth for us: and that we have now an unchangeable priest, who is able to save them to the uttermost, or to perpetuity, "that come (sincerely) to God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them¹." If you heard Christ pray for you, would it not encourage you to pray, and persuade you that God would not reject you? Undoubtedly it would.

15. Sometimes, weak Christians, that have not the gifts of memory or utterance, are apt to think that ministers indeed and able men, are accepted of God, but that he little valueth such as them. It is here a great encouragement to the soul, to think that Jesus our great High Priest, doth make all his children priests to God. They are "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that they should shew forth the praises of him that hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light: an holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ^k." Even their "broken hearts and contrite spirits, are a sacrifice which God will not despise^l." He knoweth the meaning of the Spirit's groan.

16. The strength of corruptions which molest the soul, and are too often struggling with it, and too much prevail, doth greatly discourage us in our approach to that God that

¹ Heb. vii. 24, 25.^k 1 Pet. ii. 5. 9.^l Rom. viii. 26, 27.

teth all the workers of iniquity. And here faith may find relief in Christ, not only as he pardoneth us, but as he hath conquered the devil and the world himself, and bid us be of good cheer, because he hath conquered, and hath all the power given him in heaven and earth, and can give us victorious grace, in the season and measure which he seeth meetest for us. We can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth us. Go to him then by faith and prayer, and you shall find that his grace is sufficient for you.

17. The thoughts of God are the less delightful to the soul, because that death and the grave do interpose, and we must pass through them before we can enjoy him : and it is displeasing to nature, to think of a separation of soul and body, and to think that our flesh must rot in darkness. But against this, faith hath wonderful relief in Jesus Christ. Forasmuch as we were partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil ; and deliver them who through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage^m." What an encouragement it is to faith, to observe that Christ once died himself, and that he rose from the dead, and reigneth with the Father : it being impossible that death should hold him. And having conquered that which seemed to conquer him, it no more hath dominion over him, but he hath the keys of death and hell. We may now entertain death as a disarmed enemy, and say, " O death, where is thy sting ? O grave where is thy victory ?" Yea, it is sanctified by him to be our friend, even an entrance into our Master's joy : it being best for us to depart and be with Christⁿ. And, therefore, death is become our gain^o. O what abundance of strength and sweetness may faith perceive from that promise of Christ, " If any man serve me, let him follow me, and where I am, there shall also my servant be^p." As he was dead, but now liveth for evermore, so hath he promised, that " because he liveth, therefore shall we live also^q." But of this, I have written two treatises of death already.

18. The terror of the day of judgment, and of our particular doom at death, doth make the thoughts of God less

^m Heb. ii. 14, 15.

^p John xii. 26.

ⁿ Phil. i. 23.

^q John xiv. 19.

^o Phil. i. 21.

pleasing and delectable to us. And here, what a relief is for faith to apprehend that Jesus Christ must be our Judge. And will he condemn the members of his body? Shall we be afraid to be judged by our dearest friend?—by him that has justified us himself already, even at the price of his own blood?

19. The very strangeness of the soul to the world is seen, and to the inhabitants and employments there, do greatly stop the soul in its desires, and in its delightful approaches unto God. Had we seen the world where God must be enjoyed, the thoughts of it would be more familiar and sweet. But faith can look to Christ, and say, 'I know my Head is there: he seeth it for me: he knoweth what he possesses, prepareth, and promiseth to me: and I will quietly rest in his acquaintance with it.'

20. Nay, the Godhead itself is so infinitely above that, in itself, it is inaccessible; and it is ready to amaze and overwhelm us, to think of coming to the incomprehensible Majesty: but it emboldeneth the soul, to think of our glorified nature in Christ, and that, even in heaven, God will everlastingly condescend to us in the Mediator. For the mediation of redemption and acquisition shall be ended (and thus he shall deliver up the kingdom to the Father) yet it seems that a mediation of fruition shall continue: Christ said to his Father, "I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory." We shall "rejoice," when the "marriage supper of the Lamb is come." "They are blessed that are called to his marriage supper." "The Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple and the light of the new Jerusalem." Heaven would not be so familiar, or so sweet to my thoughts if it were not that our glorified Lord is there, in whose love and glory we must live for ever.

O Christian! as ever thou wouldst walk with God, in comfortable communion with him, study and exercise the life of faith, in the daily use and improvement of Christ who is our life, and hope, and all.

Grand Direct. III. 'Understand well what it is to believe in the Holy Ghost: and see that he dwell and operate

^r John xvii. 24.

^s Rev. xix. 7.

^t Ver. 9.

^u Rev. xxi. 22, 23.

thee, as the life of thy soul, and that thou do not resist or quench the Spirit, but thankfully obey him.'

Each person in the Trinity, is so believed in by Christians, as that in baptism, they enter distinctly into covenant with them; which is, to accept the mercies of, and perform the duties to, each person distinctly⁷. As to take God for our God, is more than to believe that there is a God; and to take Christ for our Saviour, is more than barely to believe that he is the Messiah: so to believe in the Holy Ghost, is to take him for Christ's agent or advocate with our souls, and for our guide, and sanctifier, and comforter, and not only to believe that he is the third person in the Trinity. This, therefore, is a most practical article of our belief.

If the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost be the unpardonable sin, then all sin against the Holy Ghost, must needs have a special aggravation by being such: and if the sin against the Holy Ghost be the greatest sin, then our duty towards the Holy Ghost, is certainly none of our smallest duties. Therefore the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, and our duty towards him, and sin against him, deserve not the least, or last place in teaching, learning, and most serious consideration.

Two sorts do most dangerously sin against, or abuse the Holy Ghost. The first are the profane, who through custom and education, can say 'I believe in the Holy Ghost,' and say, that 'he sanctifieth them and all the elect people of God;' but hate or resist all sanctifying works and motions of the Holy Ghost, and hate all those that are sanctified by him, and make them the objects of their scorn, and deride the very name of sanctification, or at least the thing⁸.

The second sort are the enthusiasts, or true fanatics, who advance, extol, and plead for the Spirit, against the Spirit; covering their greatest sins against the Holy Ghost, by crying up, and pretending to the Holy Ghost⁹. They

⁷ *Scrutari temeritas est, credere pietas, nosse vita.* Bernard. de consid. ad Eugen. lib. 5.

⁸ *Deus est principium effectivum in creatione, reffectivum in redemptione, perfectivum in sanctificatione.* Joh. Combis comp. Theol. lib. iv. c. 1.

⁹ *Rejectis prophetis et apostolicis scriptis, Manichæi novum Evangelium scripserunt: et ut antecellere communi hominum multitudini et semidei viderentur, simularunt entusiasmos seu afflatus, subito in turba se in terram objicientes, et velut attoniti diu tacentes; deinde tanquam redeuntes ex specu Trophonio et plorantes,*

plead the Spirit in themselves, against the Spirit in their brethren, yea, and in almost all the church: they plead the authority of the Spirit in them, against the authority of the Spirit in the Holy Scriptures; and against particular truths of Scripture; and against several great and needful duties, which the Spirit hath required in the word; and against the Spirit in their most judicious, godly, faithful teachers. But can it be the Spirit that speaks against the Spirit? Is the Spirit of God against itself? Are we “not all baptized by one Spirit” (and not divers or contrary) “into one body^b?” But it is “no marvel, for satan to be transformed into an angel of light, or his ministers into the ministers of Christ, and of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their works^c.” The Spirit himself, therefore, hath commanded us, that we “believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world^d.” “Yea, the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils^e.” Therefore take heed that you neither mistake nor abuse the Holy Spirit.

I. The doctrine concerning the Holy Ghost, to be believed, is briefly this:—1. That the Holy Ghost, as given since the ascension of Christ, is his agent on earth, or his advocate with men (called by him the Paraclete). Instead of his bodily presence, which, for a little space, he vouchsafed to a few, being ascended, he sendeth the Holy Spirit, as better for them, to be his agent continually to the end, and unto all, and in all that do believe^f. 2. This Holy Spirit, so sent, infallibly inspired the holy apostles and evangelists, first to preach, and then to write the doctrine of Christ, contained (as indited by him) in the Holy Scriptures; perfectly imprinting therein the holy image of God^g. 3. The same Spirit in them, sealed this holy doctrine, and the testimony of these holy men, by many miracles and wonderful gifts, by which they did actually convince the unbelieving

multa vaticinati sunt; prorsus ut Anabaptistæ recens fecerunt in seditione Monasteriensi. Etsi autem in quibusdam manifesta simulatio fuit, tamen aliquibus reipsum Diabolis furores immissos esse certum est. Carion. Chron. lib. iii. p. 54.

^b 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13.

^c 2 Cor. xi. 13—15.

^d 1 John iv. 1.

^e 1 Tim. iv. 1.

^f John xvi. 7, 8.

^g John xv. 26. John xvi. 13. Gal. iii. 1—4. Heb. ii. 3, 4.

world, and plant the churches. 4. The same Spirit (having first by the apostles, given a law or canon to the universal church, constituting its offices, and the duty of the officers, and the manner of their entrance,) doth qualify and dispose men, for the stated, ordinary, ministerial work (which is to explain and apply the aforesaid Scriptures), and directeth those that are to ordain and choose them (they being not wanting on their part); and so he appointeth pastors to the church^b. 5. The same Spirit assisteth the ministers (thus sent in their faithful use of the means,) to teach and apply the Holy Scriptures, according to the necessities of the people, the weight of the matter, and the majesty of the word of God. 6. The same Spirit doth, by this word (heard or read), renew and sanctify the souls of the elect; illuminating their minds; opening and quickening their hearts; prevailing with, changing, and resolving their wills, thus writing God's word, and imprinting his image by his word, upon their hearts; making it powerful to conquer and cast out their strongest, sweetest, dearest sins; and bringing them to the saving knowledge, love, and obedience of God in Jesus Christ^c. The same Holy Spirit assisteth the sanctified, in the exercise of this grace, to the increase of it, by blessing and concurring with the means appointed by him to that end; and helpeth them to use those means, perform their duties, conquer temptations, oppositions, and difficulties, and so confirmeth and preserveth them to the end. 8. The same Spirit helpeth believers, in the exercise of grace, to feel it, and discern the sincerity of it in themselves, in that measure as they are meet for, and in these seasons when it is fittest for them. 9. The same Spirit helpeth them, hereupon, to conclude that they are justified and reconciled to God, and have right to all the benefits of his covenant. 10. Also, he assisteth them actually to rejoice in the discerning of this conclusion. For though reason of itself may do something in these acts, yet, so averse is man to all that is holy, and so many are the difficulties and hindrances in the way, that, to the effectual performance, the help of the Spirit of God is necessary.

By this enumeration of the Spirit's operations, you may see the errors of many detected, and many common ques-

^b Eph. iii. 2—4. 8. 13.

^c Acts xxvi. 18. John xiv. 16, 26.

tions answered. 1. You may see their blindness, that pretend the Spirit within them, against Scripture, ministry, or the use of God's appointed means: when the same Spirit first indited the Scripture, and maketh it the instrument to illuminate and sanctify our souls. God's image is, (1.) Primarily, in Jesus Christ his Son. (2.) Derivatively, by his Spirit, imprinted perfectly in the Holy Scriptures. (3.) And by the Scripture, or the holy doctrine of it, instrumentally impressed on the soul. So that the image of God in Christ is the cause of his image in his holy word or doctrine, and his image in his word, is the cause of his image on the heart. So a king may have his image, (1.) Naturally, on his son who is like his father. (2.) Expressively, in his laws, which express his wisdom, clemency, and justice. (3.) And effectively, on his subjects and servants, who are by his law reduced to a conformity to his mind. As a man may first cut his arms or image on his seal, and then by that seal imprint it on the wax; and though it be perfectly cut on the seal, it may be imperfectly printed on the wax; so God's image is naturally perfect in his Son, and regularly or expressively perfect on the seal of his holy doctrine and laws; but imperfectly on his subjects, according to their reception of it in their several degrees.

Therefore, it is easy to discern their error, that tell men the light or Spirit within them, is their rule, and a perfect rule, yea, and that it is thus in all men in the world; when God's Word and experience flatly contradict it, telling us that infidels and enemies of God, and all the ungodly are in darkness, and not in the light; and that all that speak not according to this Word, (the law and testimony) have "no light in them;" and therefore no "perfect light to be their rule^k." The Ministry is sent, to bring them from darkness to light: therefore, they had not a sufficient light in them before^l. "Wo to them that put darkness for light, and light for darkness^m:" telling the children of darkness, and the haters of the light, that they have a perfect light and rule within them, when God saith, "They have no light in themⁿ." "He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even till now^o." The light within a wicked man, is

^k Isa. viii. 20.^l Acts xxvi. 17, 18.^m Isa. v. 20.ⁿ 1 John i. 4—8^o 1 John ii. 9—11.

“darkness” and “blindness,” and therefore not his rule. Even the light that is in godly men, is the knowledge of the rule, and not the rule itself at all, nor ever called so by God. Our rule is perfect; our knowledge is imperfect: for Paul himself saith, “We know in part: but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part, shall be done away: now we see through a glass darkly^p.” “The Gospel is hid to them that are lost,” being “blinded by satan^q.”

There is an admirable, unsearchable concurrence of the Spirit, and his appointed means, and the will of man, in the procreation of the new creature, and in all the exercises of grace, as there is of male and female in natural generation; and of the earth, the sun, the rain, the industry of the gardener, and the seminal virtue of life and specification, in the production of plants with their flowers and fruits. And as wise as it would be to say, it is not the male but the female, or not the female but the male that generateth; or to say, it is not the earth but the sun, or not the sun but the rain, or not the rain but the seminal virtue, that causeth plants with flowers and fruits: so wise is it to say, it is not the Spirit but the word and means, or it is not the word and means but the Spirit, or it is not the reason, and will and industry of man, but the Spirit: or, if we have not wisdom enough to assign to each cause its proper interest in the effect, that therefore we should separate what God hath conjoined, or deny the truth of the causation, because we comprehend not the manner and influence—this is but to choose to be befooled by pride, rather than confess that God is wiser than we.

2. You may here discern also, how the Spirit assureth and comforteth believers: and how palpably they err, that think the Spirit comforteth or assureth us of our salvation without the use of its evidencing grace. The ten things mentioned pp. 190, 191, is all that the Spirit doth herein. But to expect his comforts without any measure of discerning his graces, which can only rationally prove our right to the blessings of the promise, this is to expect that he should comfort a rational creature not as rational, but darkly cause him to rejoice he knoweth not why: and that he should make no use of faith to our comfort: for faith resteth understandingly upon the promise, and expecteth the performance of

^p 1 Cor. xiii. 9, 10, 12.

^q 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4.

it to those that it is made to, and not to others. Indeed there is a common encouragement and comfort, which all men, even the worst, may take from the universal, conditional promise: and there is much abatement of our fears and troubles that may be fetched from probabilities and uncertain hopes of our own sincerity and interest in the promise. But to expect any other assurance or comfort from the Spirit, without evidence, is but to expect immediate revelations or inspirations to do the work, which the Word of promise and faith should do. The soul's consent to the covenant of grace, and fiducial acceptance of an offered Christ, is justifying, saving faith: every man hath an object in the promise and offer of the Gospel for this act, and therefore may rationally perform it. (Though all have not hearts to do it.) This may well be called, faith of adherence; and is itself our evidence, from which we must conclude, that we are true believers; the discerning of this evidence, called by some, 'the reflex act of faith,' is no act of faith at all, it being no believing of another, but the act of conscience, knowing what is in ourselves. The discerning and concluding that we are the children of God, participateth of faith and conscientious knowledge, which gave us the premises of such a conclusion.

3. You may hence perceive also how we are said to be "sealed" by the Spirit^r: even as a man's seal doth signify the sealed to be his own: so the "Spirit of holiness in us," is God's seal upon us, signifying that we are his^s. Every one that "hath the Spirit," is sealed by having it: and this is his evidence, which, if he discern, he may know that he is thus sealed.

4. Hereby also you may see what the "earnest and firstfruits of the Spirit" is^t: the Spirit is given to us by God, as the earnest of the glory which he will give us. To whomsoever he giveth the spirit of faith, and love, and holiness, he giveth the seed of life eternal, and an inclination thereto, which is his earnest of it.

5. Hereby also you may see how the Spirit witnesseth that we are the children of God: the word 'witness' is put here principally for evidence: if any one question our adoption, the witness or evidence which we must produce to

^r Eph. i. 13. Rom. viii. 9. Eph. iv. 30.

^s 2 Tim. ii. 19.

^t 2 Cor. i. 22.

prove it, is the "Spirit of Jesus sanctifying us," and dwelling in us: this is the chief part (at least) of the sense of the text, Rom. viii. 16. Though it is true, that the same Spirit witnesseth by (1.) Shewing us the grace which he hath given us; (2.) And by shewing us the truth of the promise made to all believers: (3.) And by helping us from those promises to conclude with boldness, that we are the children of God: (4.) And by helping us to rejoice therein.

II. I have been the longer (though too short) in acquainting you with the office of the Holy Ghost (supposing your belief that he is the third person in the Trinity) because it is an article of grand importance, neglected by many that profess it, and because there are so many and dangerous errors in the world about it. Your great care now must be, 1. To find this Spirit in you, as the principle of your operations: and, 2. To obey it, and follow its motions, as it leadeth you to communion with God. Of the first I have spoken in the first chapter. For the second, observe these few Directions.

Direct. 1. 'Be sure you mistake not the Spirit of God and its motions, nor receive, instead of them, the motions of satan, or of your passions, pride, or fleshly wisdom.'—It is easy to think you are obeying the Spirit, when you are obeying satan and your own corruptions against the Spirit. By these fruits the Spirit of God is known. 1. The Spirit of God is for heavenly Wisdom, and neither for foolishness nor treacherous craftiness^a. The Spirit of God is a spirit of love, delighting to do good; its doctrine and motions are for love, and tend to good; abhorring both selfishness and hurtfulness to others^b. 3. He is a Spirit of Concord, and is ever for the unity of all believers; abhorring both divisions among the saints, and carnal compliances and confederacies with the wicked^c. 4. He is a Spirit of Humility and self-denial, making us, and our knowledge, and gifts, and worth, to be very little in our own eyes^d; abhorring pride, ambition, self-exalting, boasting, as also the actual debasing of ourselves by earthliness or other sin^e. 5. He is a Spirit

^a Psal. xix. 7. xciv. 8. Jer. iv. 22. 1 Cor. ii. 4—7. ^b Gal. v. 21, 22.

^c 1 Cor. xii. Eph. iv. 3—6. 13. 1 Cor. i. 10. iii. 3. Rom. vi. 17, 18.

^d Nemo igitur vir magnus sine aliquo afflatu Divino unquam fuit. Cic. Nat. D. ii. 166.

^e Matt. xviii 3. Ephes. iv. 2.

of Meekness, and patience, and forbearance; abhorring stupidity, and inordinate passion, boisterousness, tumult, envy, contention, reviling, and revenge^b. 6. He is a Spirit of Zeal for God, resolving men against known sin, and for known truth and duty; abhorring a furious, destroying zeal, and also an indifferency in the cause of God, and a yielding compliance with that which is against it^c. 7. He is a Spirit of Mortification, crucifying the flesh, and still contending against it, and causing men to live above all the glory, and riches, and pleasures of the world: abhorring both carnal licentiousness and sensuality, and also the destroying and disabling of the body, under the pretence of true mortification^d. 8. The Spirit of Christ contradicteth not the doctrine of Christ in the holy Scripture, but moveth us to an exact conformity thereto^e. This is the sure rule to try pretences and motions of every spirit by: for we are sure that the Spirit of Christ is the author of that Word; and we are sure he is not contrary to himself. 9. The motions of the Spirit do all tend to our good, and are neither ludicrous, impertinent, or hurtful finally: they are all for the perfecting of sanctification, obedience, and for our salvation. Therefore unprofitable trifles, or despair, and hurtful distractions and disturbances of mind, which drive from God, unfit for duty, and hinder salvation, are not the motions of the Spirit of God^f. 10. Lastly, The Spirit of God subjecteth all to God, and raiseth the heart to him, and maketh us spiritual and divine, and is ever for God's glory^g. Examine the texts here cited, and you will find that by all these fruits the Spirit of God is known from all seducing spirits, and from the fancies or passions of self-conceited men.

Direct. 11. 'Quench not the Spirit, either by wilful sin

^b Matt. xi. 28, 29. Eph. iv. 2. James iii. 1 Pet. ii. 20—23. Gal. v. 20. Rom. xii. 18—20. Ephes. iv. 31. Col. iii. 8.

^c Gal. iv. 18. Numb. xxv. 11, 13. Titus ii. 14. James iii. 15, 17. Luke ix. 55. Rev. iii. 16.

^d Rom. viii. 1, 13. Gal. v. 17. Rom. xiii. 13, 14. 1 Cor. ix. 27. 2 Pet. ii. 19. Col. ii. 18, 21, 23.

^e Isa. viii. 20.

^f 2 Tim. i. 7. Rom. viii. 15. Isa. xi. 2. Gal. v. 22. Zech. xii. 10. 1 Pet. iv. 14. 2 Cor. iii. 6.

^g 1 John iv. 5, 6. 1 Cor. vi. 11, 17, 20. Ephes. ii. 18, 22. Phil. iii. 3, 19, 20. 1 Pet. i. 2. iv. 6.

or by your neglecting of its offered help.'—It is as the spring to all your spiritual motions ; as the wind to your sails : you can do nothing without it. Therefore reverence and regard its help, and pray for it, and obey it, and neglect it not. When you are sure it is the Spirit of God indeed, that is knocking at the door, behave not yourselves as if you heard not. 1. Obey him speedily : delay is a present, unthankful refusal, and a kind of denial. 2. Obey him thoroughly : a half obedience is disobedience. Put him not off with Ananias and Sapphira's gift ; the half of that which he requireth of you. 3. Obey him constantly : not sometime hearkening to him, and more frequently neglecting him ; but attending him in a learning, obediential course of life.

Direct. III. 'Neglect not those means which the Spirit hath appointed you to use, for the receiving of its help, and which he useth in all his holy operations.'—If you will meet with him, attend him in his own way, and expect him not in by-ways where he useth not to go. Pray, and meditate, and hear, and read, and do your best, and expect his blessing. Though your ploughing and sowing will not give you a plentiful harvest without the sun, and rain, and the blessing of God, yet these will not do it neither, unless you plough and sow. God hath not appointed a course of means in nature or morality in vain, nor will he use to meet you in any other way.

Direct. IV. 'Do most when the Spirit helpeth you most.'—Neglect not the extraordinary measures of his assistance : if he extraordinarily help you in prayer, or meditation, improve that help, and break not off so soon as at other times (without necessity) : not that you should omit duty till you feel his help : for he useth to come in with help in the performance, and not in the neglect of duty : but tire not yourself with affected length, when you want the life.

Direct. V. 'Be not unthankful for the assistance he hath given you.'—Deny not his grace : ascribe it not to nature : remember it to encourage your future expectations : unthankfulness and neglect are the way to be denied further help.

Quest. 'But how shall I know whether good effects be

from the means, or from my reason and endeavour, and when from the Spirit of God?

Ans. It is as if you should ask, How shall I know whether my harvest be from the earth, or sun, or rain, or God, or from my labour? I will tell you how. They are all causes: if the effect be there, they all concur: if the effect be wanting, some of them are wanting. It is foolish to ask, which is the cause, when the effect is not produced but by the concurrence of them all. If you had asked, which cause did fail, when the effect faileth? there were reason in that question: but there is none in this. The more to blame those foolish atheists, that think God or the Spirit is not the cause, if they can but find that reason and means are in the effect. Your reason, and conscience, and means would fall short of the effect, if the Spirit put not life into all.

Obj. 'But I am exceedingly troubled and confounded with continual doubts about every motion that is in my mind, whether it be from the Spirit of God, or not.'

Answ. The more is your ignorance, or the malice of satan causing your disquiet. In one word, you have sufficient direction to resolve those doubts, and end those troubles. Is it good, or evil, or indifferent, that you are moved to? This question must be resolved from the Word of God, which is the rule of duty. If it be good, in matter, and manner, and circumstances, it is from the Spirit of God, (either its common or special operation): if it be evil or indifferent, you cannot ascribe it to the Spirit. Remember that the Spirit cometh not to you, to make you new duty which the Scripture never made your duty, and so bring an additional law; but to move and help you in that which was your duty before. (Only it may give the matter, while Scripture giveth the obligation by its general command.) If you know not what is your duty, and what not, it is your ignorance of Scripture that must be cured: interpret Scripture well, and you may interpret the Spirit's motions easily. If any new duty be motioned to you, which Scripture commandeth not, take such motions as not from God: (unless it were by extraordinary, confirmed revelation.)

Grand Direct. iv. 'Let it be your chiefest study to attain to a true, orderly, and practical knowledge of God, in his several attributes and relations; and to find a due impression from each of them upon your hearts, and a distinct, effectual improvement of them in your lives.'

Because I have written of this point more fully in another treatise, "Of the Knowledge of God, and Converse with Him," I shall but briefly touch upon it here, as not willing to repeat that which there is delivered: Only, let me briefly mind you of these few things: 1. That the true knowledge of God is the sum of godliness, and the end of all our other knowledge; and of all that we have or do as Christians. As Christ is a teacher that came from God, so he came to call and lead us unto God; or else he had not come as a Saviour. It is from God that we fell by sin, and to God that we must be restored by grace. To save us, is to restore us to our perfection, and our happiness; and that is to restore us unto God^a.

2. That the true knowledge of God, is powerful and effectual upon the heart and life: and every attribute and relation of God, is so to be known, as to make its proper impress on us: and the measure of this saving knowledge, is not to be judged of, by extensiveness, or number of truths concerning God which we know, so much as by the clearness, and intensiveness, and the measure of its holy effects upon the heart.

3. This is it that denominateth both ourselves, and all

^a Laertius in Zenone, saith, Dicunt Stoici Deum esse animal immortale, rationale, perfectum ac beatum, à malo omni remotissimum, providentia sua mundum et que sunt in mundo administrans omnia: non tamen inesse illi humanæ formæ lineamenta. Cæterum esse opificem immensi hujus operis, sicut et patrem omnium. — Etque multis appellari nominibus juxta proprietates suas. — Quosdam item esse dæmones dicunt quibus insit hominum miseratio, inspectores rerum humanarum; heroes quoque solutas corporibus, sapientum animas. — Bonos aiunt esse divinos, quod in seipsis quasi habeant Deum. Malum vero impium et sine Deo esse, quod duplici ratione accipitur, sive quod Deo contrarius dicatur, sive quod aspernetur Deum: id tamen malis omnibus non convenire. Pios autem et religiosos esse sapientes, peritos divini juris omnes. Pietatem esse scientiam divini cultus. Dils item eos sacrificia fecturos, castosque futuros. Quippe ea quæ in Deos admittuntur peccata detestari, Dilsque charos ac gratos fore quo sancti justique in rebus divinis sint.*

* Vide Diog. Laert. lib. vii. sect. 147, &c. Mr. Baxter's citations from Laertius, tend to convey too favourable an opinion of the principles of the Stoics, if they are taken thus detached from their context. The reader should peruse the whole of the seventh book. (T. C.)

our duties **HOLY**: when God's image is thus imprinted on us; and we are like him by the new birth, as children to their father; and by his knowledge, both our hearts and lives are made divine; being disposed unto God, devoted to him and employed for him; he being our life, and light, and love.

4. This is the sum of the covenant of God with man, "I will be thy God, and thou shalt be my people." And the other parts of the covenant, "that Christ be our Saviour, and the Holy Ghost our Sanctifier," are both subservient unto this; there being now no coming unto God, but as reconciled in Christ our Mediator, and by the teaching and drawing of the Holy Ghost. To be our God, is to be to us an absolute Owner, a most righteous Governor, and a most bountiful Benefactor or Father; as having created us, redeemed and regenerated us; and this according to his most blessed nature, properties, and perfections.

5. It is not only a loose and inconstant effect of your particular thoughts of God, that is the necessary impress of his attributes (as to fear him, when you remember his greatness and justice): but it must be a habit or holy nature in you, every attribute having made its stated image upon you; and that habit or image being in you, a constant principle of holy, spiritual operations. A habit of reverence, belief, trust, love, &c. should be, as it were, your nature.

6. Not that the knowledge of God in his perfections, should provoke us to desire his properties and perfections: for to have such an aspiring desire to be gods, were the greatest pride and wickedness. But only we must desire, (1.) To be as like God, in all his communicable excellencies, as is agreeable to our created state and capacity. (2.) And to have as near and full communion with him, as we can attain to and enjoy.

7. The will of God, and his goodness, and holiness, are more nearly propounded to us, to be the rule of our conformity, than his power, and his knowledge. Therefore his law is most immediately the expression of his will; and our duty and goodness lie in our conformity to his law: being holy as he is holy.

Because I may not stand on the particulars, I shall give you a brief, imperfect scheme of that of God, which you *thus* know.

I. As in Himself.

I. In his BEING, Quod sit,	1. One; and indivisible: In Three Persons.^a	1. The FATHER,	1. Necessary,
	2. Immense: and in- comprehensible.	2. The SON,	2. Independent,
	3. Eternal.^b	3. The HOLY GHOST.	3. Immutable.
II. In his NATURE: Quid sit.	A SPIRIT	1. Simple: uncompounded.	
		2. Impassionate, incorruptible, immortal.	
		3. Invisible, intactable, &c.	
	and LIFE itself.	1. POWER,	
		2. UNDERSTANDING,	
		3. WILL.	
III. In his PERFEC- TIONS. Qualis sit.	1. OMNIPOTENT,	1. MOST GREAT,	1. BEING HIM- SELF.
	2. OMNISCENT,	2. MOST WISE,	2. KNOWING HIMSELF.
	3. MOST GOOD.	3. MOST HOLY and HAPPY.	3. LOVING and Enjoying Himself.

II. As Related to his Creatures.

I. The EFFICIENT Cause of all things: Rom. ix. 36. 'OF HIM,'	1. CREATOR and Conserver.	1. Our OWNER or LORD: most Absolute, Free, and Irresistible.	(d) 1. Our Life, and Strength, and Safety. 3. Our Light, and Wisdom.	(e) 1. Perfecting our Natures in Heavenly Life. 2. Whom we shall behold in Glorious Light.
II. The DIRIGENT Cause: "THROUGH HIM;"	2. REDEEMER and Saviour.	2. Our RULER or KING: 1. By Legislation: 2. Judgment: 3. Execution: Absolute, Perfect, True, Holy, Just, Merciful, Patient, Terrible.		
III. The FINAL Cause: "TO HIM," are all things: To him be Glory for ever: Amen.	3. REGENERATOR and Sanctifier.	3. Our BENEFACTOR or FATHER; 1. Most Loving: 2. Most Bountiful 3. Most Amiable: (Patient, Merciful, Constant.) Causally and Objectively (d)	3. Our Love and Joy: and so our End & Rest, & Happiness hereafter (e)	3. Whom we shall Please and Love; and be Pleased in him, and Loved by him; Rejoice in him, Praise him, and so Enjoy him, Perfectly & Perpetually.

See these practically opened and improved, in the First Part of my "Divine Life." a more full Explication of the Attributes fit for the more capacious, is reserved for another state.

For the right improvement of the knowledge of all these attributes of God, I must refer you to the forementioned treatise. The acts which you are to exercise upon God, are these: 1. The clearest knowledge you can attain to¹: 2. The firmest belief: 3. The highest estimation: 4. The greatest admiration: 5. The heartiest and sweetest complacency or love: 6. The strongest desire: 7. A filial awfulness, reverence, and fear: 8. The boldest, quieting trust and confidence in him: 9. The most fixed waiting, dependance, hope, and expectation: 10. The most absolute self-resignation to him: 11. The fullest and quietest submission to his disposals: 12. The humblest and most absolute subjection to his governing authority and will, and the exactest obedience to his laws. 13. The boldest courage and fortitude in his cause, and owning him before the world in the greatest sufferings. 14. The greatest thankfulness for his mercies. 15. The most faithful improvement of his talents, and use of his means, and performance of our trust. 16. A reverent and holy use of his name and word: with a reverence of his secrets; forbearing to intrude or meddle with them. 17. A wise and cautious observance of his providences, public and private; neither neglecting them, nor mis-interpreting them; neither running before them, nor striving discontentedly against them. 18. A discerning, loving, and honouring his image in his children, notwithstanding their infirmities and faults; without any friendship to their faults, or over-magnifying, or imitating them in any evil. 19. A reverent, serious, spiritual adoration, and worshipping, in public and private, with soul and body, in the use of all his holy ordinances; but especially in the joyful celebration of his praise, for all his perfections and his mercies. 20. The highest delight, and fullest content and comfort in God, that we can attain: especially a delight in knowing him, and obeying and pleasing him, worshipping and praising him, loving him, and being beloved of him, through Jesus Christ; and in the hopes of the perfecting of

¹ De diis ita ut sunt loquere. Bias in Laert. Leg. Pauli Scaligeri Theses de Archetypo Mundo, Ep. Cath. l. 14. God never wrought miracle to convince Atheism, because his ordinary works convince it. Lord Bacon, Essay 16. Nec vero Deos ipse, qui intelligitur a nobis, alio modo intelligi potest, nisi mens soluta quædam et libera, segregata ab omni concretionem mortali, omniaque sentiens et movens, ipsaque vædita motu sempiterno. Cic. Tusc. I. 66.

all these, in our everlasting fruition of him in heavenly glory. All these are the acts of piety towards God; which I lay together for your easier observation and memory: but some of them must be more fully opened, and insisted on.

Grand Direct. v. ‘Remember that God is your Lord, or Owner: and see that you make an absolute resignation of yourselves, and all that you have, to him as his own; and use yourselves and all accordingly: trust him with his own, and rest in his disposals.’

Of this, I have already spoken in my “Sermon of Christ’s Dominion,” and in my “Directions for a sound Conversion:” and therefore must but touch it here. It is easy, notionally to know and say that God is our Owner, and we are not our own: but if the habitual, practical knowledge of it, were as easy, or as common, the happy effects of it would be the sanctification and reformation of the world. I shall first tell you, what this duty is, and how it is to be performed; and then, what fruits and benefits it will produce, and what should move us to it.

I. The duty lieth in these acts: 1. That you consider the ground of God’s propriety in you; (1.) In making you of nothing, and preserving you. (2.) In redeeming you by purchase. (3.) In regenerating you, and renewing you for himself. The first is the ground of his common natural propriety, in you and all things. The second is the ground of his common, gracious propriety in you and all men, as purchased by Christ, Rom. xiv. 9. John xiii. 3. The third is the ground of his special, gracious propriety in you, and all his sanctified, peculiar people. Understand and acknowledge what a plenary dominion God hath over you, and how absolutely and wholly you are his. 2. Let it exceedingly please you, to think that you are wholly his: it being much better for you, as to your safety, honour, and happiness, than to be your own, or any’s else. 3. As God requireth it in his covenant of grace, that he have his right, by your consent, and not by constraint; so you must thankfully accept the motion, and with hearty and full consent of will, resign yourselves to him, as his own, even as his creatures, his ransomed ones, and his regenerate children, by a covenant never to be violated. 4. You must carefully watch against the claim and reserves of carnal selfishness;

lest while you confess you are God's, and not your own; you should secretly still keep possession of yourselves against him, or re-assume the possession which you surrendered. 5. You must use yourselves ever after, as God's, and not your own^k.

II. In this using yourselves as wholly God's, consisteth both your further duty, and your benefits. 1. When God's propriety is discerned and consented to, it will make you sensible how you are obliged to employ all your powers of soul and body to his service; and to perceive that nothing should be alienated from him, no creature having any co-ordinate title to a thought of your hearts, or a glance of your affection, or a word of your mouths, or a minute of your time. The sense of God's propriety, must cause you to keep constant accounts between God and you; and to call yourselves to a frequent reckoning, whether God have his own, and you do not defraud him; whether it be his work that you are doing; and for him that you think, and speak, and live? And all that you have, will be used as his, as well as yourselves: for no man can have any good thing, that is more his own, than he is his own himself.

2. Propriety discerned, doth endear us in affection to our owner. As we love our own children, so they love their own fathers. Our very dogs love their own master's better than another. When we can say with Thomas, "My Lord, and my God," it will certainly be the voice of love. God's common propriety in us, as his created and ransomed ones, obligeth us to love him with all our heart; but the knowledge of his peculiar propriety, by regeneration, will more effectually command our love.

3. God's propriety perceived, will help to satisfy us of his love and care of us: and will help us to trust him in every danger; and so take off our inordinate fear, and anxieties, and caring for ourselves^l. The apostle proveth Christ's love to his church, from his propriety, "No man

^k Sit igitur hoc a principio persuasum civibus, dominos esse omnium rerum ac moderatores Deos, eaque, quæ gerantur eorum ger ditione ac numine eosdemque optimè de genere hominum mereri, et, qualis quisque sit, quid agat, quid in se admittat; qua mente, qua pietate colat religiones, intueri, piorumque et impiorum habere rationem. Cic. Leg. ii. 15, 16.

^l *Esse Deos et eorum providentiâ mundus administrari, eosdemque consulere rebus humanis nec solum universis, verum etiam singulis.* Cic. de Divin. l. 117.

ever yet hated his own flesh^m." God is not regardless of his own. As we take care of our cattle, to preserve them, and provide for them, more than they do for themselves, for they are more ours than their own; so God is more concerned in the welfare of his children, than they are themselves, they being more his than their own. Why are we afraid of the wrath and cruelty of man? Will God be mindless and negligent of his own? Why are we over-careful and distrustful of his providence? Will he not take care of his own, and make provision for them? "God, even our own God shall bless usⁿ." God's interest in his church, and cause, and servants, is an argument which we may plead with him in prayer, and with which we may greatly encourage our confidence. "For my name's sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off. For mine own sake, even for mine own sake, will I do it: for how should my name be polluted? and I will not give my glory to another^o." "But now, thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel; Fear not: for I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, &c.^p." If God should neglect our interest, he will not neglect his own.

God's propriety in us discerned, doth so much aggravate our sin against him, that it should greatly restrain us; and further, our humiliation and recovery when we are fallen: "Ye shall be holy unto me: for I the Lord am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine^q." "I swear unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, and thou becamest mine, saith the Lord^r," when he is aggravating Jerusalem's sin. "Ye are not your own: for ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are Gods^s." Justice requireth, that every one have his own.

5. It should silence all murmurings and repinings against the providence of God, to consider that we are his own. Doth he afflict you? and are you not his own? Doth he kill you? are you not his own? As a ruler, he will shew you reason enough for it in your sins: but as your absolute

^m Ephes. v. 29.

ⁿ Psal. lxxvii. 6.

^o 1 Chron. xvii. 21, 22. Isa. xlviii. 9, 11.

^p Isa. xliii. 1, 2.

^q Lev. xx. 26.

^r Ezek. xvi. 8.

^s 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20.

Lord and owner, he need not give you any other reason, than that he may do with his own as he list. It is not possible that he can do any wrong to that, which is absolutely his own. If he deny you health, or wealth, or friends, or take them from you; he denieth you, or taketh from you nothing but his own. Indeed, as a governor and a father, he hath secured the faithful of eternal life: otherwise, as their owner, he could not have wronged them, if he had made the most innocent, as miserable as he is capable to be. Do you labour, and beat, and kill your cattle, because they are your own (by an imperfect propriety)? and dare you grudge at God for afflicting his own, when their consciences tell them, that they have deserved it, and much more?

And that you may not think that you have resigned yourselves to God entirely, when you do but hypocritically profess it, observe: 1. That man is not thus resigned to God, that thinketh any service too much for God that he can do. 2. Nor he that thinketh any cost too great for God, that he is called to undergo. 3. Nor he that thinketh that all is won, of his time, or wealth, or pleasure, or any thing which he can save or steal from God: for all is lost that God hath not. 4. Nor he that must needs be the disposer of himself, and his condition and affairs, and God must humour him, and accommodate his providence to his carnal interest and will, or else he cannot bear it, or think well of it. 5. Remember that all that is bestowed in sin upon God's enemies is used against him, and not as his own. 6. And that he that hideth his talent, or useth it not at all, cannot be said to use it for God. Both idleness, and alienating the gifts of God, are a robbing him of his own.

III. To help you in this work of self-resignation, often consider: 1. That if you were your own, you were most miserable. You could not support, preserve, or provide for yourselves: who should save you in the hour of temptation or distress? Alas! if you are humbled Christians, you know so much of your own insufficiency, and feel yourselves such a daily burden to yourselves, that you have sure, enough of yourselves ere now. And beg of God, above all your enemies, to save you from yourselves; and of all judgments, to save you from being forsaken of God, and given up to yourselves. 2. Remember that none in the world

hath sufficient power, wisdom, and goodness, to take the full care and charge of you but God : none else can save you, or sanctify you, or keep you alive one hour : and therefore it is your happiness and honour that you are his. 3. His right is absolute, and none hath right to you but he. None else did create you, redeem you, or regenerate you. 4. He will use you only in safe and honourable services, and to no worse an end, than your endless happiness. 5. What you deny him, or steal from him, you give to the devil, the world, and the flesh. And do they better deserve it? 6. You are his own in title, whether you will or not; and he will fulfil his will upon you. Your consent and resignation is necessary to your good, to ease you of your cares, and secure you from present and eternal misery.

Grand Direct. vi. ‘Remember that God is your Sovereign King, to rule and judge you : and that it is your rectitude and happiness to obey and please him. Labour therefore to bring your souls and bodies into the most absolute subjection to him, and to make it your delight and business sincerely and exactly to obey his will.’

Having resigned yourselves absolutely to God, as your owner, you are next to submit yourselves absolutely to God, as your governor or king. How much of our religion consisteth in this, you may see in the nature of the thing, in the design of the law and Word of God, in the doctrine and example of Jesus Christ, in the description of the last judgment, and in the common consent of all the world¹. Though love is the highest work of man, yet is it so far from discharging us from our subjection and obedience, that it constraineth us to it most powerfully and most sweetly, and must itself be judged of by these effects. “If ye love me, keep my commandments. He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me. If any man love me, he will keep my words : and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings².” “If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love ; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in

¹ Aristippus rogatus aliquando quid habeant eximium Philosophi? “Si omnes,” inquit, “leges intendant, æquabiliter vivemus. Diog. Laert. lib. ii. sect. 69. p. 120.

² Joh. xiv. 15. 21. 23, 24.

his love. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you^x.” “If ye know these things, happy are ye do them^y.” “For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments, and his commandments are not grievous.” “He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandment, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whosoever keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also to walk, even as he walked. If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that the seed of one that doth righteousness is born of him^a.” “Whosoever abideth in him, sinneth not: whosoever sinneth, hath not seen him, neither known him. Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doth righteousness is righteous, as he is righteous. He that committeth sin, is of the devil, for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness, nor receiveth the Son of God, is not of God. And whatsoever we receive of the Father, we receive of the Son also, because the Father sendeth his Son into the world, and he giveth him power over all flesh, that whosoever believeth in the Son, may have eternal life. He that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.” “Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city^c.”

I set together these testimonies of the Scripture, that the stream of Divine authority may carry you to a full sense of the necessity of obedience.

I shall here first tell you what this full subjection is, then I shall direct you how to attain it.

I. As in God there is first his relation of our King, then his actual government of us, by his laws and judgments; so in us, there is first our relation of subjects to God, then our actual obedience. We are subjects by divine obligation, before we consent (as rebels are): but our consent or self-obligation is necessary to our voluntary obedience and acceptation with God. Subjection is our stated ob-

^x John xv. 10. 14.

^a 1 John ii. 4.

^y John xiii. 17.

^b 1 John iii. 6—10. 22.

^c 1 John v.

^d Rev. xxi.

tion to obedience. This subjection and habit of obedience, is then right and full, 1. When the sense of God's authority over us, is practical, and not notional only. 2. And when it is deep rooted and fixed; and become as a nature to us : as a man's intention of his end is, that hath a long journey to go, which carrieth him on to the last step : or as a child's subjection to his parents, or a servant's to his master, which is the habit or principle of his daily course of life. 3. When it is lively, and ready to put the soul upon obedience. 4. When it is constant, keeping the soul in a continual attendance upon the will of God. 5. When it hath universal respect to all his commandments. 6. When it is resolute, powerful, and victorious against temptations to disobedience. 7. When it is superlative, respecting God as our supreme King, and owning no authority against him, nor any but what is subordinate to him. 8. When it is voluntary, pleasant, cheerful, and delectable to us to obey him to the utmost of our power.

II. To bring the soul to this full subjection and obedience to God, is so difficult, and yet so reasonable, so necessary, and so excellently good, that we should not think any diligence too great, by which it is to be attained. The Directions that I shall give you, are, some of them to habituate the mind to an obediential frame, and some of them also, practically to further the exercise of obedience in particular acts.

Direct. 1. 'Remember the unquestionable, plenary title that God hath, to the government of you, and of all the world.'—The sense of this will awe the soul, and help to subject it to him, and to silence all rebellious motions. Should not God rule the creatures which he hath made? Should not Christ rule the souls which he hath purchased? Should not the Holy Ghost rule the souls which he hath regenerated and quickened?

Direct. 11. 'Remember that God is perfectly fit for the government of you, and all the world.'—You can desire nothing reasonably in a governor, which is not in him. He hath perfect wisdom, to know what is best : he hath perfect goodness, and therefore will be most regardful of his subjects' good, and will put no evil into his laws. He is almighty, to protect his subjects, and see to the execution of

his laws. He is most just, and therefore can do no wrong, but all his laws and judgments are equal and impartial. He is infinitely perfect and self-sufficient, and never needed a lie, or a deceit, or unrighteous means to rule the world; not to oppress his subjects to attain his ends. He is our very end, and interest, and felicity; and therefore hath no interest opposite to our good, which should cause him to destroy the innocent. He is our dearest Friend and Father, and loveth us better than we love ourselves; and therefore we have reason confidently to trust him, and cheerfully and gladly to obey him, as one that ruleth us in order to our own felicity.

Direct. III. ‘Remember how unable and unfit you are to be governors of yourselves.’—So blind and ignorant; so biassed by a corrupted will; so turbulent are your passions; so incessant and powerful is the temptation of your sense and appetite; and so unable are you to protect and reward yourselves, that methinks you should fear nothing in this world more, than to be given up to “your own heart’s lusts, to walk in your own (seducing) counsels^d.” The brutish appetite and sense, hath got such dominion over the reason of carnal, unrenewed men, that for such to be governed by themselves, is for a man to be governed by a swine, or the rider to be ruled by the horse.

Direct. IV. ‘Remember how great a matter God maketh of his kingly prerogatives, and of man’s obedience.’—The whole tenor of the Scripture will tell you this. His precepts, his promises, his threatenings, his vehement exhortations, his sharp reproofs, the sending of his Son and Spirit, the example of Christ and all the saints, the reward prepared for the obedient, and the punishment for the disobedient;—all tell you aloud, that God is far from being indifferent whether you obey his laws or not. It will teach you to regard that, which you find is so regarded of God.

Direct. V. ‘Consider well of the excellency of full obedience, and the present benefits which it bringeth to yourselves and others.’—Our full subjection and obedience to God, is to the world and the soul, as health is to the body. When all the humours keep their due temperament, proportions; and place, and every part of the body is placed

^d Psal. lxxxi. 11, 12.

and used according to the intent of nature, then all is at ease within us : our food is pleasant ; our sleep is sweet ; our labour is easy : and our vivacity maketh life a pleasure to us : we are useful in our places, and helpful to others that are sick and weak. So is it with the soul that is fully obedient : God giveth him a reward, before the full reward : he findeth that obedience is a reward to itself ; and that it is very pleasant to do good ; God owneth him, and conscience speaketh peace and comfort to him : his mercies are sweet to him : his burdens and his works are easy : he hath easier access to God than others. Yea, the world shall find, that there is no way to its right order, unity, peace, and happiness, but by a full subjection and obedience to God.

Direct. vi. ‘Remember the sad effects of disobedience, even at present, both in the soul and in the world.’—When we rebel against God, it is the confusion, ruin, and death of the soul, and of the world. When we disobey him, it is the sickness or disordering of the soul, and will make us groan : till our bones are set in joint again, we shall have no ease : God will be displeased, and hide his face : conscience will be unquiet : the soul will lose its peace and joy : its former mercies will grow less sweet : its former rest will turn to weariness : its duty will be unpleasant, : its burden heavy. Who would not fear such a state as this ?

Direct. vii. ‘Consider, that when God doth not govern you, you are ruled by the flesh, the world, and the devil.’—And what right or fitness they have to govern you, and what is their work, and final reward, methinks you should easily discern. “If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die^e.” “And if ye sow to the flesh, of the flesh ye shall reap corruption^f.” It will strike you with horror, if in the hour of temptation, you would but think : ‘I am now going to disobey God, and to obey the flesh, the world, or the devil, and to prefer their will before his will.’

Direct. viii. ‘Turn your eye upon the rebellious nations of the earth, and upon the state of the most malignant and ungodly men ; and consider, that such madness and misery as you discern in them, every wilful disobedience to God doth tend to, and partaketh of in its degree.’—To see a swinish drunkard in his vomit ; to hear a raging bedlam

^e Rom. viii. 13.

^f Gal. vi. 8.

curse and swear; or a malignant wretch blaspheme and scorn at a holy life: to hear how foolishly they talk against God; and see how maliciously they hate his servants, one would think should turn one's stomach against all sin for ever. To think what beasts or incarnate devils many of the ungodly are. To think what confusion and inhumanity possess most of those nations that know not God, one would think should make the least degree of sin seem odious to us, when the dominion and ripeness of it are so odious.

Direct. ix. 'Mark what obedience is expected by men; and what influence government hath upon the state and affairs of the world, and what the world would be without it.'—And sure this will make you think honourably and delightfully of the government of God. What would a nation be without government, but like a company of thieves and lawless murderers? or like the pikes in a pond, that first eat up the other fish, and then devour one another: the greater living upon the less. Bears and wolves would live more quietly together, than ungoverned men, (except those few that are truly subject to the government of God.) Government maintaineth every man in his propriety; and keepeth lust and madness from breaking out; and keepeth peace and order in the world. What would a family be without government? Children and servants are kept by it in their proper place and work. Think then how necessary and excellent is the universal government of God.

Direct. x. 'Think well of the endless rewards and punishments, by which God will procure obedience to his laws, or vindicate the honour of his government, on the disobedient.'—That the world may see that he giveth sufficient motives for all that he requireth, he will reward the obedient with everlasting blessedness, and punish the rebels with endless misery. You shall not say that he bids you work for nothing. Though you can give him nothing but his own, and therefore can merit nothing of him, in point of commutative justice; yet, as he is a Governor and a Father, he will put so wide a difference between the obedient and the rebellious, that one shall be judged to everlasting joy, with a "Well done, good and faithful ser-

vant," and the other, to "everlasting punishment^s." Is there not enough in heaven, in a life of endless joys with God, to make obedience lovely to you, and to make sin loathsome? Is there not enough in hell, to deter you from disobedience, and drive you unto God? God will rule whether you will or not. Consent to be obedient, or he will punish you without asking your consent.

The Directions for the nearer exciting of your Obedience, and confirming your full Subjection, are these :

Direct. i. 'Keep still the face of your souls upon God, and in the sense of his greatness, and of his continual presence, and of his particular providence.'—And this will keep you in an obediential frame. You will easily then perceive, that so great a God cannot be disobeyed, without great iniquity and guilt. And, that a God that is continually with you, must be continually regarded. And, that a God that exactly observeth and mindeth the thoughts and words of every man, should by every man be exactly minded and observed. This will help you to understand the meaning of the tempter, when you perceive that every temptation is an urging of you to offend, for nothing, so great a God, that is just then observing what you do.

Direct. ii. 'Always remember whither you are going; that you are preparing for everlasting rest and joy, and must pass through the righteous judgment of the Lord: and that Christ is your guide and governor, but to bring you safely home, as the Captain of your salvation: and that sin is a rejecting of his help, and of your happiness.'—Think not that God doth rule you as a tyrant, to your hurt or ruin, to make his own advantage of you; or by needless laws, that have no respect to your good and safety; but think of him, as one that is conducting you to eternal life, and would now guide you by his counsel, and afterwards take you to his glory. Think that he is leading you to the world of light, and life, and love, and joy, where there are rivers of pleasure, and fulness of delight for evermore, that you may see his face, and feel his love, among a world of blessed spirits; and not be weeping and gnashing the teeth, with

impious, impenitent souls. And is not such a government as this desirable? It is but like the government of a physician, to save his patient's life. Or like your government of your children, which is necessary to their good, that cannot feed or rule themselves. Or like a pilot's governing the ship, which is conveying you to possess a kingdom; if the mariners obey him, they may safely arrive at the desired port; but if they disobey him, they are all cast away and perish. And should such a government as this is, seem grievous to you? or should it not be most acceptable, and accurately obeyed?

Direct. III. 'Still think, what dangers, difficulties, and enemies you must pass through to this rest, and that all your safety dependeth upon the conduct and assistance of your guide.'—And this will bring over self-love to command your strict obedience. You are to pass through the army of your enemies; and will you here disobey the Captain of your salvation? or would you have him leave you to yourselves? Your disease is mortal, and none but Jesus Christ can cure it; and if he cure it not, you are lost for ever. No pain of gout or stone is comparable to your everlasting pain! and yet will you not be obedient to your physician? Think, when a temptation comes, 'If there were a narrow bridge over the deepest gulf or river, and all my friends and happiness lay on the further side, and I must needs go over whether I will or not; if Christ would take me by the hand and lead me over, would I be tempted to refuse his help, or to lose his hand? or if he should offer to lose me, and leave me to myself, should I not tremble, and cry out as Peter, "Lord, save me^b," or as the disciples, "Save, Master, we perish?" And should I not then hold him fast, and most accurately obey him, when he is leading me to life eternal, that I may escape the gulf of endless misery?'

Direct. IV. 'Remember still, how bad, and blind, and backward, and deceitful, and weak you are yourselves, and therefore what need you have of the greatest watchfulness, lest you should disobey your pilot, and lose your guide, before you are aware.'—O what a heart have we to watch! A lazy heart, that will be loitering or sitting down, when we should be following our Lord. A foolish heart, that will

^b Matt. xiv. 30.

let him go, while we play with every play-fellow in our way. A cowardly heart, that will steal away, or draw back in danger, when it should follow our general. A treacherous heart, that will give us the slip, and deceive us, when we seemed surest of it. A purblind heart, that even when it followeth Christ, our guide, is hardly kept from missing the bridge, and falling into the gulf of misery. Think well of these, and you will obey your governor.

Direct. v. ‘Forget not the fruits of your former obedience and disobedience;’—if you would be kept in an obedient frame. Remember, that obedience hath been sweetest afterward: and that you never yet found cause to repent or be ashamed of it. Remember, that the fruit of sin was bitter, and that when your eyes were opened, and you saw your shame, you would fain have fled from the face of God; and that then it appeared another thing to you, than it seemed in the committing. Remember what groans, and heart’s grief it hath cost you: and into what fears it brought you of the wrath of God: and how long it was before your broken bones were healed: and what it cost both Christ and you. And this will make the very name and first approach of sin, to cast you into a preventing fear. A beast that hath once fallen into a gulf or quick-sand, will hardly be driven into the same again. A fish that was once stricken and escaped the hook, will fear and fly from it the next time. A bird that hath once escaped the snare, or the talons of the hawk, is afterwards afraid of the sight or noise of such a thing. Remember where you fell, and what it cost you, and what you escaped which it might have cost you, and you will obey more accurately hereafter.

Direct. vi. ‘Remember, that this is your day of trial, and what depends upon your accurate obedience.’—God will not crown untried servants. Satan is purposely suffered to tempt you, to try whether you will be true to God or not. All the hope that his malice hath of undoing you for ever, consisteth in his hope to make you disobedient to God. Methinks these considerations should awaken you to the most watchful and diligent obedience. If you were told beforehand, that a thief or cut-purse had undertaken to rob you, and would use all his cunning and industry to do it, you would then watch more carefully than at another

time. If you were, in a race to run for your lives, you would not go then in your ordinary pace. Doth God tell you before, that he will try your obedience by temptation, and as you stand or fall, you shall speed for ever; and will not this keep you watchful and obedient?

Direct vi. ‘Avoid those tempting and deluding objects, which are still enticing your hearts from your obedience; and avoid that diverting crowd and noise of company or worldly business, which drowns the voice of God’s commands.’—If God call you into a life of great temptations, he can bring you safely through them all: but if you rush into it wilfully, you may soon find your own disability to resist. It is dangerous to be under strong and importunate temptations, lest the stream should bear us down: but especially to be long under them, lest we be weary of resisting. They that are long solicited do too often yield at last: it is hard to be always in a clear, and ready, and resolute frame: few men have their wits, much less their graces, always at hand, in a readiness to use. And if the thief come when you are dropped asleep, you may be robbed before you can awake. The constant drawings of temptations do oft-times abate the habit of obedience, and diminish our hatred of sin and holy resolutions, by slow, insensible degrees, before we yield to commit the act. And the mind that will be kept in full subjection, must not be so diverted in a crowd of distracting company or business, as to have no time to think on the motives of his obedience. This withdrawing of the fuel may put out the fire.

Direct. viii. ‘If you are unavoidably cast upon strong temptation take the alarm; and put on all the armour of God, and call up your souls to watchfulness and resolution, remembering that you are now among your enemies, and must resist as for your lives.’—Take every temptation in its naked, proper sense, as coming from the devil, and tending to your own damnation, by enticing your hearts from your subjection unto God: suppose you saw the devil himself in his instruments, offering you the bait of preferment, or honour, or riches, or fleshly lusts, or sports, or of delightful meats or drinks, to tempt you to excess; and suppose you heard him say to you plainly, ‘Take this for thy salvation: sell me for this thy God, and thy soul, and thy ever-

lasting hopes; commit this sin, that thou mayst fall under the judgment of God, and be tormented in hell with me for ever. Do this to please thy flesh, that thou mayst displease thy God, and grieve thy Saviour: I cannot draw thee to hell, but by drawing thee to sin: and I cannot make thee to sin against thy will; nor undo thee, but by thy own consent and doing: therefore, I pray thee, consent and do it thyself, and let me have thy company in torments.' This is the naked meaning of every temptation: suppose, therefore, you saw and heard all this, with what detestation then would you reject it? With what horror would you fly from the most enticing bait? If a robber would entice you out of your way and company, with flattering words, that you might fall into the hands of his companions, if you knew all his meaning and design beforehand, would you be enticed after him? Watch, therefore, and resolve when you know beforehand the design of the devil, and what he intendeth in every temptation.

Direct. ix. 'Be most suspicious, fearful, and watchful about that, which your flesh doth most desire, or finds the greatest pleasure in.'—Not that you should deny your bodies all delight in the mercies of God: if the body have none, the mind will have the less: mercy must be differenced from punishment; and must be valued and relished as mercy: mere natural pleasing of the senses is in itself no moral good or evil. A holy improvement of lawful pleasure is a daily duty: inordinate pleasure is a sin: all is inordinate which tendeth more to corrupt the soul, by enticing it to sin, and turning it from God, than to fit and dispose it for God and his service, and preserve it from sinning. But still remember, it is not for sorrow, but delight that draweth away the soul from God, and is the flesh's interest which it sets up against him. Many have sinned in sorrow and discontents: but none ever sinned for sorrows and discontents: their discontents and sorrows are not taken up and loved for themselves; but are the effects of their love to some pleasure and content, which are denied them, or taken from them. Therefore though all your bodily pleasures are not sin; yet seeing nothing but the pleasures of the flesh and carnal mind are the end of sinners, and the devil's great and chiefest bait, and this only causeth men's perdition, you

have great reason to be most afraid of that which is most pleasing to your flesh, and to the mind as it is corrupt and carnal: escape the delusions of fleshly pleasure, and you escape damnation: you have far more cause to be afraid of prosperity than of adversity; of riches than of poverty; of honour than of obscurity and contempt; of men's praises and applause than of their dispraises, slanders, and reproach; of preferment and greatness than of a low and mean condition; of a delicious than of less tempting meats and drinks; of curious, costly, than of mean, and cheap, and plain attire. Let those that have hired out their reason to the service of their fleshly lusts, and have delivered the crown and sceptre to their appetites, think otherwise. No wonder if they that have sold the birthright of their intellects to their senses, for a mess of pottage, for a whore, or a high place, or a domineering power over others, or a belly-full of pleasant meats or liquors, do deride all this, and think it but a melancholy conceit, more suitable to a hermit or anchorite than to men of society and business in the world. As heaven is the portion of serious believers and mortified saints alone, so it shall be proper to them alone, to understand the doctrine and example of their Saviour, and practically to know what it is to deny themselves, and forsake all they have, and take up their cross and follow Christ, and by the Spirit to mortify the deeds of the body¹. Such know that millions part with God for pleasures, but none for griefs; and that hell will be stored with those that preferred wealth, and honour, and sports, and gluttony, drink, and filthy lusts, before the holiness and happiness of believers; but none will be damned for preferring poverty, and disgrace, and abstinence, hunger, and thirst, and chastity, before them. It must be something that seemeth good, that must entice men from the chiefest good: apparent evil is no fit bait for the devil's hook. Men will not displease God, to be displeased themselves; nor choose present sorrow instead of everlasting joys: but for the "pleasures of sin for a season" many will despise the endless pleasures.

Direct. x. 'Meet every motion to disobedience with an army of holy graces, with wisdom, and fear, and hatred, and resolution, with love to God, with zeal and courage:

¹ Luke xiv. 26—29. 33. Rom. vii. 5—7. 13. Col. iii. 1—4.

and quench every spark that falls upon your hearts before it breaks out into a flame.'—When sin is little, and in its infancy, it is weak and easily resisted : it hath not then turned away the mind from God, nor quenched grace, and disabled it to do its office. But when it is grown strong, then grace grows weak and we want its help, and want the sense of the presence, and attributes, and truths of God, to rebuke it. Stay not till your hearts are gone out of hearing, and straggled from God beyond the observance of his calls. The habit of obedience will be dangerously abated, if you resist not quickly the acts of sin.

Direct. x1. 'Labour for the clearest understanding of the will of God, that doubtfulness about your duty do not make you flag in your obedience, and doubtfulness about sin, do not weaken your detestation and resistance, and draw you to venture on it.'—When a man is sure what is his duty, it is a great help against all temptations that would take him off; and when he is sure that a thing is sinful, it makes it easier to resist. And therefore it is the devil's method to delude the understanding, and make men believe that duty is no duty; and sin is no sin; and then no wonder if duty be neglected, and sin committed : and therefore be raised up one false prophet or other to say to Ahab, 'Go, and prosper;' or to say, 'There is no hurt in this:' to dispute for sin, and to dispute against duty. And it is almost incredible, how much the devil hath got when he hath once made it a matter of controversy. Then every hypocrite hath a cloak for his sin, and a dose of opium for his conscience, when he can but say, 'It is a controversy; some are of one mind, and some of another: you are of that opinion, and I am of this.' Especially if there be wise and learned on both sides; and yet more, if there be religious men on both sides; and more yet, if he have an equal number on his side; and most of all, if he have the major vote (as error and sin have commonly in the world). If Ahab have but four hundred lying, flattering prophets to one Micaiah, he will think he may hate him, reproach him, and persecute him, without any scruple of conscience. If it be made a controversy, whether bread be bread, and wine be wine, when we see and taste it; some will think they may venture to subscribe or swear that they hold the negative, if their credit, or livings, or lives lie upon it; much more if they can say, It is the

judgment of the Church! If it be once made a controversy, whether perjury be a sin, or whether a vow materially lawful bind, or whether it be lawful to equivocate, or lie with a mental reservation for the truth, or to do the greatest evil; or speak the falsest thing with a true and good intent and meaning, almost all the hypocrites in the country will be for the sinful part, if their fleshly interest require it; and will think themselves wronged, if they are accounted hypocrites, liars, or perjured, as long as it is but a point of controversy among learned men. If it be once made a controversy, whether an excommunicated king become a private man and it be lawful to kill him, and whether the pope may absolve the subjects of temporal lords from their allegiance (notwithstanding all their oaths); and if such learned men as Suarez, Bellarmine, Perron, &c., are for it (to say nothing of Santarellus, Mariana, &c.), you shall have a Clement, a Ravilliac, a Faux, yea, too great choice of instruments, that will be satisfied to strike the blow. If many hold it may, or must be done, some will be found too ready to do it, especially if an approved General Council (Lateran. sub Innoc. III. can. 3.) be for such Papal absolution. We have seen at home, how many will be emboldened to pull down Government, to sit in judgment on their King, and condemn him, and to destroy their brethren, if they can but say that such men think it lawful. If it were but a controversy once, whether drunkenness, whoredom, swearing, stealing, or any villany be a sin or not, it would be committed more commonly, and with much less regret of conscience. Yea, good men will be ready to think that modesty requireth them to be less censorious of those that commit it, because in controverted cases they must suspect their own understandings, and allow something to the judgment of dissenters: and so all the rules of love, and peace, and moderation, which are requisite in controversies that are about small and difficult points, the devil will make use of and apply them all to the patronage of the most odious sins, if he can but get them once to have some learned, wise, or religious defenders. And from our tenderness of the persons, we easily slide to an indulgent tenderness in censuring the sin itself: and good men themselves, by these means, are dangerously disabled to resist it, and prepared to commit it.

Direct. XII. 'Take heed lest the devil do either cast you

into the sleep of carnal security, or into such doubts, and fears, and perplexing scruples, as shall make holy obedience seem to you an impossible or a tiresome thing.'—When you are asleep in carelessness, he can use you as he list: and if obedience be made grievous and ungrateful to you,^k your heart will go against it, and you will go but like a tired horse, no longer than you feel the spur: you are half conquered already, because you have lost the love and pleasure of obedience; and you are still in danger lest difficulties should quite tire you, and weariness make you yield at last. The means by which the tempter effecteth this must afterward be spoken of, and therefore I shall omit it here.

By the faithful practice of these Directions, obedience may become, as it were, your nature; a familiar, easy, and delightful thing: and may be like a cheerful servant or child, that waiteth for your commands, and is glad to be employed by you. Your full subjection of your wills to God will be as the health, the ease, and quietness of your wills: you will feel that it is never well or easy with you, but when you are obedient and pleasing to your Creator's will. Your "delight will be in the law of the Lord^k," It will be sweeter than honey to you, and better than thousands of gold and silver: and this not for any by respect, but as it is the "law of God;" a "light unto your feet," and an infallible guide in all your duty. You will say with David, "I will delight myself in thy statutes; I will not forget thy word. Thy testimonies are my delight and my counsellors. Make me to go in the path of thy commandments, for therein do I delight^l." And, "I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart^m." And, "Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord; that delighteth greatly in his commandmentsⁿ."

Grand Direct. VII. 'Continue as the covenanted scholars of Christ, the Prophet and Teacher of his church, to learn of him, by his Spirit, word, and ministers, the farther knowledge of God, and the things that tend to your salvation; and this with an honest, willing mind; in faith, humility, and diligence; in obedience, patience, and peace.'

^k Psal. i. 2.^l Psal. cxix. 16. 24. 35. 47. 70. 77. 174.^m Psal. xl. 8.ⁿ Psal. cxii. 1.

Though I spake before, of our coming to God by Jesus Christ, as he is the way to the Father; it is meet that we distinctly speak of our relation and duty to him, as he is our teacher, our captain, and our master; as well as of our improving him, as Mediator immediately unto God. The necessity of believers, and the office and work of Christ himself, doth tell us, how much of our religion doth consist in learning of him, as his disciples. “A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me, him shall you hear^o.” This was the voice ~~that~~ came out of the cloud in the holy mount, “This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him^p.” Therefore is the title of disciples commonly given to believers. And there is a twofold teaching, which Christ hath sent ~~his~~ ministers to perform; both mentioned in their commission, Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. The one is, to “teach the nations;” so as to make disciples of them, by persuading them into the school of Christ, which containeth the teaching of faith and repentance, and whatever is necessary to their first admission, and to their subjecting themselves to Christ himself, as their stated and infallible Guide. The other is, the teaching them further to know more of God, “and to observe all things whatsoever he commanded them.” And this last is it we are now to speak of, and I shall add some sub-directions for your help.

Directions for Learning of Christ, as our Teacher.

Direct. i. ‘Remember who it is that is your teacher: that he is the Son of God, that knoweth his Father’s will, and is the most faithful, infallible Pastor of the church.’—There is neither ignorance, nor negligence, nor ambition, nor deceit in him, to cause him to conceal the mind of God. There is nothing which we need to know, which he is not both able and willing to acquaint us with.

Direct. ii. ‘Remember what it is that he teacheth you, and to what end.’—That it is not how to sin, and be damned, as the devil, the world, and the flesh would teach you; nor how to satisfy your lusts, or to know, or do, or attain the trifles of the world: but it is how to be renewed to the

^o Acts vii. 37.

^p Matt. xvii. 5.

image of God, and how to do his will, and please him, and how to be justified at his bar, and how to escape everlasting fire, and how to attain everlasting joys : consider this well, and you will gladly learn of such a teacher.

Direct. III. ‘ Let the book which he himself hath indited by his Spirit, be the rule, and principal matter of your learning.’—The Holy Scriptures are of Divine inspiration : it is them that we must be judged by, and them that we must be ruled by ; and, therefore, them that we must principally learn. Men’s books and teachings, are but the means for our learning this infallible word.

Direct. IV. ‘ Remember that, as it is Christ’s work to teach, it is your’s to hear, and read, and study, and pray, and practise what you hear.’—Do your part, then, if you expect the benefit. You come not to the school of Christ to be idle. Knowledge droppeth not into the sleepy dreamer’s mouth. Dig for it, as for silver, and search for it in the Scriptures, as for a hidden treasure. Meditate in them day and night. Leave it to miserable fools, to condemn the wisdom of the Most High.

Direct. V. ‘ Fix your eye upon himself, as your pattern and study, with earnest desire to follow his holy example, and to be made conformable to him.’—Not to imitate him in the works which were proper to him as God, or as Mediator ; but in his holiness, which he hath proposed to his disciples for their imitation. He knew how effectual a perfect example would be, where a perfect doctrine alone would be less regarded. Example bringeth doctrine nearer to our eye and heart ; it maketh it more observable, and telleth us with more powerful application, ‘ such you must be, and thus you must do.’ The eye maketh an easier and deeper impression on the imagination and mind, than the ear doth : therefore Christ’s example, should be much preached and studied. It will be a very great help to us, to have still upon our minds, the image of the holy life of Christ ; that we be affected, as if we always saw him doing the holy actions which once he did. Paul calls the Galatians, “ foolish,” and “ bewitched,” that “ obeyed not the truth, when Christ had been set forth as crucified among them, evidently before their eyes^a.” Papists think that images serve well for this

^a Gal. iii. 1.

turn : but the records of Scripture, and the living images of Christ, whom they persecute and kill, are far more useful. How much example is more operative than doctrine alone, you may perceive by the enemies of Christ, who can bear his holy doctrine, when they cannot bear his holy servants, that practise that doctrine before their eyes. And that which most stirs up their enmity, hath the advantage for exciting the believer's piety.

Let the image of Christ, in all his holy examples, be always lively written upon your minds. 1. Let the great ones of the world remember, that their Lord was not born of such as bore rule, or were in worldly pomp and dignity, but of persons that lived but meanly in the world (however, they were of the royal line) : how he was not born in a palace, but a stable, and laid in a manger, without the attendance or accommodation of the rich.

2. Remember how he subjected himself unto his reputed father, and his mother, to teach all children subjection and obedience^r.

3. And how he condescended to labour at a trade, and mean employment in the world ; to teach us that our bodies, as well as our minds, must express their obedience, and have their ordinary employment ; and to teach men to labour and live in a calling ; and to comfort poor labourers, with assurance that God accepteth them in the meanest work, and that Christ himself lived so before them, and chose their kind of life, and not the life of princes and nobles, that live in pomp, and ease, and pleasure.

4. Remember how he refused not to submit to all the ordinances of God, and to fulfil all righteousness, and to be initiated into the solemn administration of his office by the baptism of John^s, which God approved, by sending down upon him the Holy Ghost : to teach us all to expect his Spirit in the use of his ordinances.

5. Remember how he voluntarily begun his work, with an encounter with the tempter in the wilderness, upon his fasting : and suffered the tempter to proceed, till he moved him to the most odious sin, even to worship the devil himself : to teach us that God loveth tried servants, and expecteth that we be not turned from him by temptations ; especially

^r Luke ii. 51.

^s Matt. iii. 15—17.

those that enter upon a public ministry, must be tried men, that have overcome the tempter : and to comfort tempted Christians, who may remember, that their Saviour himself was most blasphemously tempted, to as odious sins as ever they were ; and that to be greatly tempted, without consenting or yielding to the sin, is so far from being a sin in itself, that it is the greatest honour of our obedience ; and that the devil, who molesteth and haunteth us with his temptations, is a conquered enemy, whom our Lord in person hath overcome.

6. Remember how earnestly and constantly he preached ; not stories, or jingles, or subtle controversies, but repentance, and faith, and self-denial, and obedience. So great was his love to souls, that, when he had auditors, he preached, not only in the temple and synagogues, but in mountains, and in a ship, and any other convenient place ; and no fury of the rulers or Pharisees could silence him, till his hour was come, having his Father's commission. And even to particular persons, he vouchsafed, by conference, to open the mysteries of salvation^t : to teach us to love and attend to the plain and powerful preaching of the Gospel, and not to forbear any necessary means for the honour of God, and the saving of souls, because of the enmity, or opposition of malicious men, but to "work while it is day, seeing the night is coming when none can work".

7. Remember how compassionate he was to men's bodies, as well as to their souls ; going up and down with unwearied diligence, doing good ; healing the blind, and lame, and deaf, and sick, and possessed ; and how all his miracles were done in charity, to do good : and none of them to do hurt : so that he was but living, walking LOVE and MERCY. To teach us to know God, in his love and mercy ; and to abound in love and mercy to our brethren ; and to hate the spirit of hurtfulness, persecution, and uncharitableness ; and to lay out ourselves in doing good ; and to exercise our compassion to the bodies of men, as well as to their souls, according to our power.

8. Remember how his zeal and love endured the reproach, and resisted the opposition of his friends, who went to lay hold on him as if he had been beside himself^x : and

^t John iii. and iv.

^u John ix. 4.

^x Mark iii. 20, 21.

how he bid Peter “Get behind me satan ; thou art an offence unto me : for thou savourest not the things of God, but those of men,” when in carnal love and wisdom he rebuked him for resolving to lay down his life, saying, “Be it far from thee, this shall not be unto thee.” To teach us to expect that carnal love and wisdom in our nearest friends, will rise up against us in the work of God, to discourage us both from duty and from sufferings : and that all are to be shaken off ; and counted as the instruments of satan, that would tempt us to be unfaithful to our trust and duty, and to favour ourselves by a sinful avoiding of the sufferings which God doth call us to undergo.

9. Remember how through all his life, he despised the riches of the world, and chose a life of poverty, and was a companion of the meanest, neither possessing sumptuous houses, or great attendance, or spacious lands, or a large estate. He lived in a visible contempt of all the wealth and splendor, and greatness of the world : to teach us how little these little things are to be esteemed ; and that they are none of the treasure and portion of a saint ; and what a folly it is to be fond of such snares, and diversions, and temptations which make the way to heaven to be to us, as a needle’s eye.

10. Observe, how little he regardeth the honour and applause of men ; how “he made himself of no reputation, but took upon him the form of a servant,” refusing to be “made a king,” or to have a “kingdom of this world.” Though he told malignant blasphemers how greatly they sinned in dishonouring him, yet did he not seek the honour of the world : to teach us how little the thoughts or words of ignorant men do contribute to our happiness, or are to be accounted of ; and to turn our eyes from the impenitent censures of flesh and blood, to the judgment of our Almighty Sovereign, to whom it is that we stand or fall.

11. Remember, how little he made provision for the flesh, and never once tasted of any immoderate, sinful pleasure. How far was he from a life of voluptuousness and sensuality ? Though his avoiding the formal fastings of the Pharisees, made them slander him as a “gluttonous person,” and “a wine-bibber^b,” as the sober Christians were

^y Matt. xvi. 22, 23.

^z Phil. ii. 7.

^a John vi. 15.

^b Matt. xi. 19.

called ‘carnivori’, by those that thought it unlawful to eat flesh; yet so far was he from the guilt of any such sin, that never a desire of it was in his heart. You shall never find in the Gospel that Christ spent half the morning in dressing him, choosing rather to shorten his time for prayer, than not to appear sufficiently neatified, as our empty, worthless, painted gallants do: nor shall you ever read that he wasted time in idle visitations, or cards, or dice, or in reading romances, or hearing stage-plays: it was another kind of example that our Lord did leave for his disciples.

12. Mark also, how far Christ was from being guilty of any idle, or lascivious, or foolish kind of talk: and how holy and profitable all his speeches were. To teach us also to speak as the oracles of God, such words as tend to edification, and to administer grace unto the hearers, and to keep our tongues from all profane, lascivious, idle speeches.

13. Remember that pride, and passion, are condemned by your pattern. Christ bids you “Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you shall find rest unto your souls^c.” Therefore he resolveth that “except” men “be converted and become as little children, they shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven^d.” Behold therefore the Lamb of God, and be ashamed of your fierce and ravenous natures.

14. Remember that Christ your Lord and pattern did humble himself to the meanest office of love, even to wash the feet of his disciples: not to teach you to wash a few poor men’s feet, as a ceremony once a year, and persecute and murder the servants of Christ the rest of the year, as the Roman Vice-Christ doth; but to teach us, that if he their Lord and Master washed his disciples’ feet, we also should stoop as low in any office of love, for one another^e.

15. Remember also that Christ your pattern spent whole nights in prayer to God; so much was he for this holy attendance upon God^f: to teach us to “pray always and not wax faint^g.” And not to be like the impious God-haters, that love not any near or serious addresses unto God, nor those that use them, but make them the object of their cruelty or scorn.

^c Matt. xi. 28, 29.

^d Matt. xviii. 3.

^e John xii. 14.

^f If *προσευχῇ* in Luke vi. 12, do signify an oratory, it yet importeth that he continued for prayer in it.

^g Luke xviii. 1.

16. Remember also that Christ was against the Pharisees^a outside, hypocritical, ceremonious worship, consisting in lip-labour, affected repetitions, and much babbling; their ‘touch not, taste not, handle not,’ and worshipping God in vain, according to their traditions, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. He taught us a serious, spiritual worship: not “to draw nigh to God with our mouth, and honour him with our lips, while our hearts are far from him;” but to “worship God who is a Spirit, in spirit and truth^b.”

17. Christ was a sharp reprover of hypocritical, blind, ceremonious, malicious Pharisees; and warneth his disciples to take heed of their leaven. When they are offended with him, he saith, “Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone, they be blind leaders of the blind^c,” &c. To teach us to take heed of Autonomous, supercilious, domineering formal hypocrites, and false teachers, and to difference between the shepherds and the wolves.

18. Though Christ seems cautiously to avoid the owning of the Roman usurpation over the Jews, yet rather than offend them he payeth the tribute himself^d, and biddeth them “render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar’s, and to God the things that are God’s^e.” The Pharisees bring their controversy to him hypocritically, “Whether it be lawful to give tribute to Cæsar or not?” (For that Cæsar was an usurper over them, they took to be past controversy.) And Christ would give them no answer, that should either ensnare himself, or encourage usurpation, or countenance their sedition: teaching us much more to pay tribute cheerfully to our lawful Government, and to avoid all sedition and offence.

19. Yet is he accused, condemned, and executed among malefactors, as aspiring to be “King of the Jews,” and the judge called, “none of Cæsar’s friend,” if he let him go: teaching us to expect, that the most innocent Christians should be accused, as enemies to the rulers of the world, and mistaken governors be provoked and engaged against them, by the malicious calumnies of their adversaries; and that we should, in this unrighteous world, be condemned of those

^a Matt. xv. 6—9. John iv. 23, 24. Matt. xxiii.

^c Matt. xv. 12—14.

^d Matt. xvii. 25—27.

^e Matt. xxii. 21,

crimes of which we are the most innocent; and which we most abhor, and have borne the fullest testimonies against.

20. The furious rout of the enraged people deride him by their words and deeds, with a purple robe, a sceptre of reed, a crown of thorns, and the scornful name of "King of the Jews;" they spit in his face, and buffet him, and then break jests upon him: and in all this, "being reviled he reviled not again, but committed all to him that judgeth righteously¹." Teaching us to expect the rage of the ignorant rabble, as well as of deluded governors; and to be made the scorn of the worst of men: and all this without impatience, reviling, or threatening words; but quieting ourselves in the sure expectation of the righteous judgment, which we and they must shortly find.

21. When Christ is urged at Pilate's bar to speak for himself, he holds his peace: teaching us to expect to be questioned at the judgment-seat of man; and not to be over careful for the vindicating of our names from their most odious calumnies, because the judgment that will fully justify us is sure and near.

22. When Christ is in his agony, his disciples fail him; when he is judged and crucified, they "forsook him and fled^m": to teach us not to be too confident in the best of men; not to expect much from them in a time of trial, but to take up our comfort in God alone, when all our nearest friends shall fail us.

23. Upon the cross he suffered the torments and ignominy of death for us, praying for his murderers: "leaving us an example that we should follow his stepsⁿ"; and that we should think not life itself too dear to part with, in obedience to God, and for the love of Christ and one another^o, and that we forgive and pray for them that persecute us.

24. In all this suffering from men, he feels also so much of the fruit of our sin upon his soul, that he crieth out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" To teach us, if we fall into such calamity of soul as to think that God himself forsaketh us, to remember, for our support, that the Son of God himself before us cried out, My God, why hast thou forsaken me? And that in this also we may expect

¹ 1 Pet. ii. 21—23. ^m Matt. xxvi. 56. ⁿ 1 Pet. ii. 21. ^o 1 John iii. 16.

office of Scripture and ministers differ from the office of the Spirit and your consciences, you will be confounded as the sectaries of these times have been, that separate what God hath joined together, and plead against Scripture or ministers, under pretence of extolling the Spirit, or the light within them. As your meat must be taken into the stomach, and pass the first concoction before the second can be performed, and chylication must be before sanguification; so the Scripture and ministers must bring truth to your eyes and ears, before the Spirit or conscience bring them to your hearts and practice. But they lie dead and ineffectual in your brain or imagination, if you hearken not to the secret teachings of the Spirit and conscience, which would bring them further. As Christ is the principal teacher without, and ministers are but under him; so the Spirit is the principal teacher within us, and conscience is but under the Spirit, being excited and informed by it. Those that learn only of Scriptures and ministers (by reading or hearing), may become men of learning and great ability, though they hearken not to the sanctifying teachings of the Spirit or to their consciences: but it is only those that hearken first to the Scriptures and ministers, and next to the Spirit of God and to their consciences, that have an inward, sanctifying, saving knowledge, and are they that are said to be taught of God. Therefore, hearken, first with your ears what Christ hath said to you without, and then hearken daily and diligently with your hearts, what the Spirit and conscience say within. For it is their office to preach over all that again to your hearts, which you have received.

Direct. viii. 'It being the office of the present ordinary ministry, only to expound and apply the doctrine of Christ, already recorded in the Scriptures, believe not any man that contradicteth this recorded doctrine, what reason, authority, or revelation soever he pretend. 'To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to these, it is because there is no light in them'.—No reason can be reason indeed, that is pretended against the reason of the Creator and God of reason. Authority pretended against the highest authority of God is no authority: God never gave authority to any against himself; nor to deceive men's souls; nor to

dispense with the law of Christ ; nor to warrant men to sin against him ; nor to make any supplements to his law or doctrine. The apostles had their ‘ power only to edification, but not to destruction *.’ There is no revelation from God, that is contrary to his own revelation already delivered as his perfect law and rule unto the church ; and therefore none supplemental to it. If an “ apostle or an angel from heaven ‘ per possibile vel impossibile ’ shall evangelize to us besides what is evangelized,” and we “ have received,” he must be held “ accursed †.”

Direct. ix. ‘ Come not to learn of Christ with self-conceitedness, pride, or confidence in your prejudice and errors: but as little children, with humble, teachable, tractable minds.’—Christ is no teacher for those that in their own eyes are wise enough already: unless it be first to teach them to “ become fools” (in their own esteem, because they are so indeed) “ that they may be wise †.” They that are prepossessed with false opinions, and resolve that they will never be persuaded of the contrary, are unmeet to be scholars in the school of Christ. “ He resisteth the proud, but giveth more grace unto the humble ‡.” Men that have a high conceit of their own understandings, and think they can easily know truth from falsehood as soon as they hear it, and come not to learn, but to censure what they hear or read, as being able to judge of all, these are fitter for the school of the prince of pride and father of lies and error, than for the school of Christ. “ Except conversion” make men as “ little children,” that come not to carp and cavil, but to learn, they are not “ meet for the kingdom of Christ †.” Know how blind and ignorant you are, and how dull of learning, and humbly beg of the Heavenly Teacher, that he will accept you and illuminate you ; and give up your understandings absolutely to be informed by him, and your hearts to be the tables in which his Spirit shall write his law, believing his doctrine upon the bare account of his infallible veracity, and resolving to obey it ; and this is to be the disciples of Christ indeed, and such as shall be taught of God.

Direct. x. ‘ Come to the school of Christ with honest,

* 1 Cor. x. 8. 2 Cor. xiii. 10.

† Gal. i. 6–8.

‡ 1 Cor. iii. 18.

§ 1 Pet. v. 5.

¶ Matt. xviii. 3. John ii. 3–5.

willing hearts, that love the truth, and feign would know it that they may obey it; and not with false and biassed hearts, which secretly hinder the understanding from entertaining the truth, because they love it not, as being contrary to their carnal inclinations and interest.'—The word that was received into "honest hearts" was it that was as the seed that brought forth plentifully^a. When the heart saith unfeignedly, 'Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth; teach me to know and do thy will;' God will not leave such a learner in the dark. Most of the damnable ignorance and error in the world is from a wicked heart, that perceiveth that the truth of God is against their fleshly interest and lusts, and therefore is unwilling to obey it, and unwilling to believe it, lest it torment them because they disobey it. A will that is secretly poisoned with the love of the world, or of any sinful lusts and pleasures, is the most potent impediment to the believing of the truth.

Direct. xi. 'Learn with quietness and peace in the school of Christ, and make not divisions, and meddle not with others' lessons and matters, but with your own.'—Silence, and quietness, and minding your own business, is the way to profit. The turbulent wranglers that are quarrelling with others, and are religious contentiously, in envy and strife, are more likely to be corrected or ejected than to be edified. Read James iii.

Direct. xii. 'Remember that the school of Christ hath a rod; and therefore learn with fear and reverence^a.'—Christ will sharply rebuke his own, if they grow negligent and offend: and if he should cast thee out and forsake thee, thou art undone for ever. "See," therefore, that "ye refuse not him that speaketh: for if they escaped not, who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we refuse him that speaketh from heaven^b." "For how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation, which at first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by them that heard him: God also bearing them witness both with signs and wonders, and divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will^c." "Serve the Lord therefore with fear, and rejoice with trembling:

^a Matt. xiii. 23.^a Heb. xii. 28, 29. Phil. ii. 12.^b Heb. xii. 25.^c Heb. ii. 3, 4.

kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish, in the kindling of his wrath^d.”

Grand Direct. VIII. ‘Remember that you are related to Christ, as the Physician of your souls, and to the Holy Ghost, as your Sanctifier: make it therefore your serious study, to be cured by Christ, and cleansed by his Spirit, of all the sinful diseases and defilements of your hearts and lives.’

Though I did before speak of our believing in the Holy Ghost, and using his help for our access unto God, and converse with him; yet I deferred to speak fully of the cleansing and mortifying part of his work of sanctification till now; and shall treat of it here, as it is the same with the curing work of Christ, related to us as the physician of our souls: it being part of our subjection and obedience to him, to be ruled by him, in order to our cure. And what I shall here write against sin, in general will be of a twofold use. The one is, to help us against the inward corruptions of our hearts, and for the outward obedience of our lives, and so to further the work of sanctification, and prevent our sinning. The other is, to help us to repentance and humiliation, habitual and actual, for the sins which are in us, and which we have already at any time committed.

The general Directions for this curing and cleansing of the soul from sin, are contained, for the most part, in what is said already: and many of the particular Directions also may be brought from the sixth Direction before going. I shall now add but two general Directions, and many more particular ones.

Direct. I. 1. The two General Directions are these: 1. ‘Know what corruptions the soul of man is naturally defiled with: and this containeth the knowledge of those faculties, that are the seat of these corruptions, and the knowledge of the corruptions that have tainted and perverted the several faculties.’

Direct. II. 2. ‘Know what sin is, in its nature or intrinsic evil, as well as in the effects.’

1. The parts or faculties to be cleansed and cured, are both the superior and inferior. 1. The Understanding,

^d Psal. ii. 11, 12.

though not the first in the sin, must be first in the cure : for all that is done upon the lower faculties, must be by the governing power of the will : and all that is done upon the will, according to the order of human nature, must be done by the understanding. But the understanding hath its own diseases, which must be known and cured. Its malady in general is ignorance ; which is not only a privation of actual knowledge, but an undisposedness also of the understanding to know the truth. A man may be deprived of some actual knowledge, that hath no disease in his mind that causeth it : as in a case that either the object be absent, and out of reach, or that there may be no sufficient relation of it, or that the mind be taken up wholly upon some other thing, or in case a man shut out the thoughts of such an object, or refuse the evidence, which is the act of the will, even as a man that is not blind, may yet not see a particular object, 1. In case it be out of his natural reach : 2. Or if it be night, and he want extrinsic light : 3. Or in case he be wholly taken up with the observation of other things : 4. Or in case he wilfully, either shut or turn away his eyes.

It is a very hard question to resolve, how far and wherein the diseases of the understanding may be called sin. Because the understanding is not a free, but a necessitated faculty : and there can be no sin, where there is no liberty. But to clear this, it must be considered, 1. That it is not this or that faculty that is the full and proper subject of sin, but the man : the fulness of sin being made up of the vice of both faculties, understanding and will, conjunct. It is more proper to say, The man sinned, than, The intellect or will sinned, speaking exclusively as to the other. 2. ' Liberum arbitrium,' free choice is belonging to the man, and not to his will only, though principally to the will. 3. Though the will only be free in itself, originally, yet the intellect is free by participation, so far as it is commanded by the will, or dependeth on it for the exercise of its acts. 4. Accordingly, though the understanding primitively and of itself, be not the subject of morality, of moral virtues, or of moral vices, which are immediately and primarily in the will, yet participatively its virtues and vices are moralized,

and become graces or sins, laudable and rewardable, or vituperable and punishable, as they are imperate by the will, or depend upon it.

Consider then, the acts, and habits, and disposition of the understanding: and you will find, 1. That some acts, and the privation of them, are necessary, naturally, originally, and unalterably: and these are not virtues or sinful at all, as having no morality. As, to know unwillingly as the devils do, and to believe, when it cannot be resisted, though they would; this is no moral virtue at all, but a natural perfection only. So 1. To be ignorant of that which is no object of knowledge, or which is naturally beyond our knowledge, as of the essence of God, is no sin at all. 2. Nor, to be ignorant of that which was never revealed, when no fault of ours hindered the revelation, is no sin. 3. Nor, to be without the present, actual knowledge or consideration of one point, at that moment, when our thoughts are lawfully diverted, as in greater business, or suspended, as in sleep. 4. But to be ignorant, wilfully, is a sin, participatively in the intellect, and originally in the will. 5. And to be ignorant for want of revelation, when ourselves are the hinderers of that revelation, or the meritorious cause that we want it, is our sin: because, though that ignorance be immediately necessary, and hypothetically, yet, originally and remotely it is free and voluntary.

So, as to the habits and disposition of the intellect: it is no sin to want those, which man's understanding in its entire and primitive nature was without. As, not to be able to know without an object, or to know an unrevealed or too distant object, or actually to know all things knowable, at once. But there are defects or ill dispositions, that are sinfully contracted; and though these are now immediately natural^e and necessary, yet being originally and remotely voluntary or free, they are participatively sinful. Such is the natural man's disability or undisposedness to know the things of the Spirit, when the Word revealeth them. This lieth not in the want of a natural faculty to know them, but, 1. Radically in the will. 2. And thence in contrary, false apprehensions which the intellect is prepossessed with, which resisting the truth, may be called, its

^e Maxima pars hominum morbo jactatur eodem. Hor. lib. ii. Sat. 3. v. 121.

blindness or impotency to know them. And 3. In a strangeness of the mind to those spiritual things which it is utterly unacquainted with.

Note here, 1. That the will may be guilty of the understanding's ignorance, two ways : either, by positive averse-ness prohibiting or diverting it from beholding the evidence of truth : or, by a privation and forbearance of that command or excitation which is necessary to the exercise of the acts of the understanding. This last is the commonest way of the sin in the understanding ; and that may be truly called voluntary which is from the will's neglect of its office, or suspension of its act, though there be no actual violation or nolation.

2. That the will may do more in causing a disease in the understanding, than it can do in curing it. I can put out a man's eyes, but I cannot restore them.

3. That yet for all that, God hath so ordered it in his gracious dispensation of the grace of the Redeemer, that certain means are appointed by him, for man to use, in order to the obtaining of his grace, for his own recovery : and so, though grace cure not the understanding of its primitive, natural weakness, yet it cureth it of its contracted weakness, which was voluntary in its original, but necessary, being contracted. And, as the will had a hand in the causing of it, so must it have, in the voluntary use of the aforesaid means, in the cure of it. So much to shew you how the understanding is guilty of sin.

Though no actual knowledge be so immediate as to be without the mediation of the sense and fancy, yet supposing these, knowledge is distinguished into immediate and mediate. The immediate is when the being, quality, &c. of a thing, or the truth of a proposition is known, immediately, in itself, by its proper evidence. Mediate knowledge is, when the being of a thing, or the truth of a proposition is known by the means of some other intervenient thing or proposition, whose evidence affordeth us a light to discern it.

The understanding is much more satisfied when it can see things and truths immediately, in their proper evidence. But when it cannot, it is glad of any means to help it.

The further we go in the series of means (knowing one thing by another, and that by another, and so on) the more

unsatisfied the understanding is, as apprehending a possibility of mistake, and a difficulty in escaping mistake in the use of so many 'media.'

When the evidence of one thing, in its proper nature, sheweth us another, this is to know by mere discourse or argument.

When the medium of our knowing one thing, is the credibility of another man's report that knoweth it, this is (though a discourse or argument too, yet) in special, called, belief: which is strong or weak, certain or uncertain, as the evidence of the reporter's credibility is certain or uncertain, and our apprehension of it strong or weak.

In both cases, the understanding's fault is either an utter privation of the act, or disposition to it; or else a privation of the rectitude of the act. When it should know by the proper evidence of the thing, the privation of its act is called ignorance or nescience, and the privation of its rectitude is called, error (which differ as not seeing, and seeing falsely). When it should know by testimony, the privation of its act is simple unbelief, or not-believing; and the privation of its rectitude is, either disbelief, when they think the reporter erreth, or misbelief, when it believeth a testimony that is not to be believed.

So that you see by what is said, that the diseases of the mind to be cured, are 1. Mere ignorance. 2. Error; thinking truth to be falsehood, and falsehood truth. 3. Unbelief. 4. Disbelief. And 5. Misbelief.

But as the goodness is of chief regard in the object; so the discerning of the truth about good and evil, is the chiefest office of the understanding. And therefore, its disesteem of God, and glory, and grace, and its misesteem of the fleshly pleasure, and worldly prosperity, wealth, and honour, is the principal malady of the mind.

2. The diseases of the Will, are in its inclination, and in its acts. 1. An inordinate inclination to the pleasing of the fleshly appetite and fantasy, and to all carnal baits and temporal things, that tend to please it; and inordinate acts of desire accordingly. 2. An irrational backwardness to God, and grace, and spiritual good, and a refusal, or rebellion in act accordingly. These are in the will, 1. Because it is become much subject to the sensitive appetite, and

hath debased itself, and contracted, by its sinful acts, a sensual inclination, the flesh having the dominion in a corrupted soul. 2. Because the intellect, being also corrupted, oft-times misleadeth it, by over-valuing transient things. 3. Because the will is become destitute (in its corrupted state) of the power of Divine love, or an inclination to God and holy things, which should countermand the seduction of carnal objects. 4. And the understanding is much destitute of the light that should lead them higher. 5. Because the rage of the corrupted appetite is still seducing it. Mark therefore, for the right understanding of this, our greatest malady :

1. That the will never desireth evil, as evil, but as a carnal, or a seeming good. 2. Nor doth it hate good, as good, but as a seeming evil, because God and grace do seem to be his enemies, and to hurt him, by hindering him of the good of carnal pleasure, which he now preferreth. 3. Nay, at the same time that he loveth evil as it pleaseth the flesh, he hath naturally, as a man, some averseness to it, so far as he apprehendeth it to be evil : and when he hateth God and holiness as evil, for hindering him of his carnal pleasure, he naturally loveth them, so far as he apprehendeth them to be good. So that there is some love to God and good, and some hatred to evil in the ungodly : for while man is man, he will have naturally an inclination to good as good, and against evil as evil. 4. But the apprehension of sensitive good is the strongest in him, and the apprehension of spiritual good is weakest ; and therefore, the will, receiving a greater impress from the carnal appetite and mind, than from the weak apprehensions of spiritual good, is more inclined to that which indeed is worst : and so, things carnal have got the dominion, or chief, commanding interest in the soul. 5. Note also, that sin receiveth its formality, or moral evil first in the will, and not in the intellect or sensitive appetite : (for it is not sin, till it be positively or privately, immediately or mediately voluntary.) But the first motions to sin are not in the will, but in the sensitive appetite : though there, at first, it be not formally sin. 6. Note, that neither intellect, object, appetite, or sense, necessitate naturally the will to sin, but it remaineth the first in the sin and guilt.

It is a matter of great difficulty to understand, how sin first entered into the innocent soul: and it is of great importance, because an error here is of dangerous consequence. Two sorts seem to me to make God so much the necessitating cause of Adam's first sin (and so of all sin), as that it was as naturally impossible for Adam to have forborne it, according to their doctrine, as to have conquered God:— 1. Those that assert the Dominican, immediate, physical, pre-determining pre-motion; (which no created power can resist.) 2. And those that say the will acts as necessitated by the intellect, in all its acts (and so is necessitated in all its omissions); and that the intellect is necessitated by objects (as, no doubt, it is, unless as its acts are 'sub imperio voluntatis'); and all those objects are caused and disposed of by God. But, it is certain that God is not the cause of sin; and therefore, this certainty over-ruleth the case against these tenets.

At present it seemeth to me, that sin entered in this method. 1. Sense perceiveth the forbidden thing. 2. The appetite desireth it. 3. The imagination thinketh on its desirableness yet further. 4. The intellect conceiveth of it (truly) as good, by a simple apprehension. 5. The will accordingly willeth it, by a simple complacency or volition. Thus far there was no sin: but 6. The will here adhered to it too much, and took in it an excess of complacency, when it had power to do otherwise: and here sin begun. 7. And so, when the cogitations should have been called off: 8. And the intellect should have minded God, and his commands, and proceeded from a simple apprehension, to the comparing act, and said, 'The favour of God is better, and his will should rule,' it omitted all these acts, because the will omitted to command them; (yea, and hindered them.) 9. And so, the intellect was next guilty of a 'non-renuo,'— 'I will not forbid or hinder it' (and the will accordingly). 10. And next of a positive deception, and the will of consent unto the sin, and so it being "finished, brought forth death."

If you say, The will's first sinful adhesion in the sixth instance, could not be, unless the intellect first directed it so to do; I deny that, because the will is the first principle in men's actions 'quoad exercitium,' though the intellect be

the first as to specification: and therefore, the will could suspend its exercise, and its excitation of the mind. In all this I go upon common principles: but I leave it to further inquiry: 1. How far the sensitive appetite may move the locomotive faculty, without the will's command, while the will doth not forbid? And whether reason be not given man, as the rider to the horse, not to enable him to move, but to rule his motion: so that as the horse can go, if the rider hinder not, so the sensitive appetite can cause the actions of eating, drinking, thinking, speaking sensually, if reason do but drop asleep, or not hinder. 2. And so, whether in the first sin, (and ordinarily) the sensitive appetite, fantasy, and passion, be not the active movers, and the rational powers first guilty only by omitting their restraining government, which they were able to have exercised? 3. And so, whether sin be not (ordinarily) a brutish motion, or a voluntary unmanning of ourselves; the rational powers in the beginning, being guilty only of omission or privation of restraint; but afterwards brought over to subserve the sensitive appetite actively? 4. And so, whether the will, which is the 'principium actus quoad exercitium,' were not the first in the omission? The intellect having before said, 'This must be further considered,' the will commanded not that further consideration, when it could and should?

However, if it be too hard for us to trace our own souls in all their motions, it is certain, that the will of man is the first subject of moral good and evil: and uncertainties must not make us deny that which is certain.

The reader who understandeth the importance and consequence of these points, I am sure will pardon me, for this interposition of these difficult, controverted points, (which I purposely avoid, where I judge them not very needful in order to the defence or clearing of the plainer, common truths :) and as for others, I must bear their censure.

The degree of sinfulness in the will, lieth in a stiffness, and obstinacy, a tenaciousness of deceitful, temporal good, and an eagerness after it; and stubborn averseness to spiritual good, as it is against that temporal, fleshly good. This is the will's disease^f.

3. The sinfulness of the memory, is in its retentiveness

^f *Animi labe nec diuturnitate evanescit, nec manibus ullis elui potest.*

of evil, or things hurtful and prohibited^s; and its looseness, and neglect of better, spiritual, necessary things. If this were only as things present have the natural advantage to make a deeper impress on the fantasy, and things unseen and absent have the disadvantage, it were then but a natural, innocent infirmity: or, if in sickness, age, or weakness, all kind of memory equally decay. But it is plain, that if the Bible be open before our eyes, and preaching be in our ears, and things unseen have the advantage of their infinite greatness, and excellency, and concernment to us, yet our memories are like walls of stone, to any thing that is spiritual, and like walls of wax, on which you may write any thing, of that which is secular or evil. Note here, also, that the faultiness of the memory, is only so far sinful; as it is voluntary: it is the will, where the sin is as in its throne, or chiefest subject. Because men love carnal things, and love not spiritual things, therefore it is that they mind, and understand, and remember the one, and not the other. So that it is but as imperate, and participatively, that the memory is capable of sin.

4. The sinfulness of the imagination, consisteth in its readiness to think of evil, and of common, earthly things, and its inaptness to think of any thing that is holy, and good: and when we do force ourselves to holy thoughts, they are disorderly, confused, unskilfully managed, with great averseness.—Here, also, voluntariness is the life of the sin.

5. The sin of the affections, or passions, consisteth in this:—That they are too easily and violently moved, by the sensitive interest and appetite; and are habitually prone to such carnal, inordinate motions, running before the understanding and will (some of them), and soliciting and urging them to evil; and resisting and disobeying the commands of reason and the will: but dull and backward to things

^s Non incestum vel aspersione aquæ vel dierum numero tollitur.*

* The first of these quotations is incorrect; and in the second, the sense is altered by writing "non," for "nam." The words of Cicero are as follows:—*Caste jubet lex adire ad deos, animo videlicet, in quo sunt omnia: nec tollit castimoniam corporis: sed hoc oportet intelligi, cum multum animus corpori præstet; observeturque, ut casta corpora adhibeantur, multo esse in animis id servandum magis. Nam incestum vel aspersione aquæ, vel dierum numero tollitur: animi labes nec diuturnitate evanescere, nec amnibus ullis elui potest. Cic. Leg. ii. 24. (T. C.)*

spiritually good, and to execute the right dictates of the mind and will.

6. The sin of the sensitive appetite, consisteth in the inordinate rage or immoderateness to its object, which causeth it to disobey the commands of reason, and to become the great inciter of rebellion in the soul; violently urging the mind and will to consent to its desires. Materially, this dependeth much on the temper of the body: but formally, this also is so far sinful as (positively or privatively, mediately or immediately) it is voluntary. To have an appetite simply to the object of appetite, is no sin; but to have a diseased, inordinate, unruly appetite, is a sin: not primarily in itself considered; but as it is voluntary, as it is the appetite of a rational free agent, that hath thus disordered the frame of its own nature.

7. The sin of the exterior parts, tongue, hand, eyes, feet, &c. is only in act, and not in habit; or, at least, the habits are weak, and subject to the will. And it is in the execution of the sinful desires of the flesh, and commands of the will, that the same consisteth. These parts also are not the primary subjects of the guilt, but the will, that either positively puts them upon evil, or doth not restrain them when it ought: and so they are guilty but participatively and secondarily, as the other imperate faculties are. It is not good or evil, merely as it is the act of the tongue, or hand; but as it is the tongue or hand of a rational free agent (agreeable or disagreeable to the law). If a madman should speak blasphemy, or should kill, or steal, it were no further sin, than as he had voluntarily contracted the ill disposition which caused it, while he had the use of reason. If a man's hand were held and forced by another, to do mischief utterly against his will, it is the sin of the chief agent, and not of the involuntary instrument. But no force totally excuseth us from guilt, which leaveth the act to our rational choice. He that saith, 'Take this oath, or I will kill thee or torment thee,' doth use force, as a temptation which may be resisted, but doth not constrain a man to swear: for he leaveth it to his choice, whether he will swear, or die, or be tormented: and he may, and ought to choose death, rather than the smallest sin. The will may be tempted, but not constrained.

Direct. 11. ‘Labour clearly to understand the evil of sin, both intrinsical in itself, and in its aggravations and effects.’ —When you have found out where it is, and wherein it doth consist, find out the malignity and odiousness of it. I have heard some Christians complain, that they read much to shew them the evil of sin in its effects, but meet with few that shew them its evil in itself sufficiently. But, if you see not the evil of sin in itself, as well as in the effects, it will but tempt you to think God unjust in over-punishing it; and it will keep you from the principal part of true repentance and mortification; which lieth in hating sin, as sin. I shall therefore shew you, wherein the intrinsical malignity of sin consisteth.

1. Sin is (formally) the violation of the perfect, holy, righteous law of God.

2. It is a denial or contempt of the authority, or governing-power of God: as if we said, ‘Thou shalt not be our Governor in this.’

3. It is an usurping the sovereign power to ourselves of governing ourselves, in that act: for when we refuse God’s government, we set up ourselves in his stead; and so make gods of ourselves as to ourselves, as if we were self-sufficient, independent, and had right hereto.

4. It is a denying or contempt of the wisdom of God, as if he had unwisely made us a law which is unmeet to rule us.

5. It is a setting up of our folly in the place of God’s wisdom, and preferring it before him; as if we were wiser to know how to govern ourselves, and to know what is fittest and best for us now to do, than God is.

6. It is a contempt of the goodness of God, as he is the maker of the law: as if he had not done that which is best, but that which may be corrected or contradicted, and there were some evil in it to be avoided^b.

7. It is a preferring our naughtiness before his goodness, as if we would do it better, or choose better what to do.

8. It is a contempt or denial of the holiness and purity

^b See Plutarch’s Tract, entitled, “That Vice is sufficient to make a man wretched.” Si non ipso honesto movemur ut viri boni simus, sed utilitate aliqua, atque fructu, callidi sumus, non boni; si emolumentis, non suapte natura, virtus expetitur, vana erit virtus, quæ malitia rectè dicitur. P. Scal. p. 744.

of God, which sets him against sin, as light is against darkness.

9. It is a violation of God's propriety or dominion, robbing him of the use and service of that which is absolutely and totally his own.

10. It is a claiming of propriety in ourselves, as if we were our own, and might do with ourselves as we list.

11. It is a contempt of the gracious promises of God, by which he allured and bound his obedience.

12. It is a contempt of the dreadful threatenings of God, by which he would have restrained us from evil.

13. It is a contempt or denial of the dreadful day of judgment, in which an account must be given of that sin.

14. It is a denying of God's veracity, and giving him the lie: as if he were not to be believed in all his predictions, promises, and threats.

15. It is a contempt of all the present mercies, (which are innumerable and great) by which God obligeth and encourageth us to obey.

16. It is a contempt of our own afflictions, and his chastisements of us, by which he would drive us from our sins.

17. It is a contempt of all the examples of his mercies on the obedient, and his terrible judgments on the disobedient, (men and devils) by which he warned us not to sin.

18. It is a contempt of the person, office, sufferings, and grace of Jesus Christ, who came to save us from our sins, and to destroy the works of the devil; being contrary to his bloodshed, authority, and healing work.

19. It is a contradicting, fighting against, and in that not prevailing against the sanctifying office and work of the Holy Ghost, that moveth us against sin, and to obedience.

20. It is a contempt of holiness, and a defacing, in that measure, the image of God upon the soul, or a rejecting it. A vilifying of all those graces which are contrary to the sin.

21. It is a pleasing of the devil, the enemy of God and us, and an obeying him before God.

22. It is the fault of a rational creature, that had reason given him to do better.

23. It is all willingly done and chosen by a free agent, that could not be constrained to it¹.

24. It is a robbing God of the honour and pleasure which he should have had in our obedience ; and the glory which we should bring him before the world.

25. It is a contempt of the omnipresence and omniscience of God, when we will sin against him before his face, when he stands over us, and seeth all that we do.

26. It is a contempt of the greatness and almightiness of God, that we dare sin against him who is so great, and able to be avenged on us.

27. It is a wrong to the mercifulness of God, when we go out of the way of mercy, and put him to use the way of justice and severity, who delighteth not in the death of sinners, but rather that they obey, repent, and live.

28. It is a contempt of the attractive love of God, who should be the end, and felicity, and pleasure of the soul. As if, all that love and goodness of God, were not enough to draw or keep the heart to him, and to satisfy us and make us happy ; or, he were not fit to be our delight. And it sheweth the want of love to God : for if we loved him rightly we should willingly obey him.

29. It is a setting up the sordid creature before the Creator, and dung before heaven, as if it were more worthy of our love and choice, and fitter to be our delight ; and, the pleasure of sin were better for us than the glory of heaven.

30. In all which it appeareth, that it is a practical atheism, in its degree ; a taking down God, or denying him to be God : and a practical idolatry, setting up ourselves and other creatures in his stead.

31. It is a contempt of all the means of grace, which are all to bring us to obedience, and keep us or call us from our sins : prayer, sacraments, &c.

32. It is a contempt of the love and labours of the ministers of Christ ; a disobeying them, grieving them, and frustrating their hopes and the labours of their lives.

33. It is a debasing of reason, the superior faculty of the

¹ *Voluntarium est omne peccatum. Tolle excusationem : nemo peccat invitus. Martin. De vitio. de Morib. Nihil interest quo animo facias, quod fecisse vitiosum est, quia acta cernuntur, animus non videtur. Id. ibid.*

soul, and a setting up of the flesh or inferior faculties, like setting dogs to govern men, or the horse to rule the rider.

34. It is a blinding of reason, and a misusing the noblest faculties of the soul, and frustrating them of the use and ends which they were made for: and so it is the disorder, deformity, sickness, or death of the soul^k.

35. It is, in its measure, the image of the devil upon the soul, who is the father of sin: and, therefore, the most odious deformity of the soul; and this, where the Holy Ghost should dwell, and the image and delight of God should be.

36. It is the moral destruction not only of the soul, but of the whole creation, so far as the creatures are appointed as the means, to bring or keep us unto God: for the means, as a means, is destroyed when it is not used to its end. A ship is useless if no one be carried in it. A watch, as such, is useless, when not used to shew the hour of the day. All the world, as it is the book that should teach us the will of God, is cast by, when that use is cast by. Nay, sin useth the creature against God, which should have been used for him.

37. It is a contradicting of our own confessions and professions: a wronging of our consciences: a violation of our covenants and self obligations to God.

38. It is a preferring of time before eternity, and regarding things of a transitory nature, and a moment's pleasure, before that which never shall have end.

39. It is a making a breach in the harmony and order of the world: as the dislocation or deformity of a particular member, is the trouble and deformity of all the body; because the comeliness and welfare of the whole, containeth the comeliness, proportion, and welfare of all the parts. And as the dislocation or breaking of one part in a watch or clock, is against the use of all the engine; so every man being a part of the kingdom of God, doth, by sin, make a breach in the order of the whole: and also giveth an ill example to other parts, and makes himself unserviceable to the body: and dishonoureth the whole body with the blot of rebellion: and lets in judgment on the world; and kindleth

^k Sick bodies only suffer ill; but sick souls both suffer ill, and do ill. Plutarch's *Morals*, p. 314.

a consuming fire in the place where he liveth ; and is cruel and injurious to others.

40. Sin is not only a preferring the body before the soul, but it is also an unmercifulness, or cruelty against ourselves, both soul and body, and so is contrary to the true use of the indelible principle of self-love : for it is a wounding and abusing the soul, and defiling the body in this life, and a casting both on the wrath of God, and into the flames of hell hereafter, or a dangerous venturing them into the way of endless damnation and despair, and a contempt of those insufferable torments. All these parts of malignity and poison are intrinsical to sin, and found in the very nature of it.

The common aggravations of sin being written of by many, and easily gathered from what is said of the nature of it : I shall briefly name only a few.

1. The infinite perfection of God in all those blessed attributes and relations, which sin is against, is the greatest aggravation of sin.

2. The inconceivable glory of heaven, which is despised, is a great aggravation of sin.

3. So is the greatness of the torments of hell, which sinners despise and venture on.

4. So is the great opposition that God hath made against sin, having said and done so much against it, and declared himself to hate nothing else immediately in the world.

5. The clearness of evidence against it, the nothingness of all that can be said for it, is also a great aggravation of it.

6. So is the fulness, and fitness, and power of all the means in creatures, providences, and Scriptures that is vouchsafed the world against it.

7. So is the experience and warning of all ages, the repentings of the converted, and the disowning it by almost all, when they come to die. Wonderful ! that the experience of the world for above five thousand years, will teach them no more effectually to avoid so mortal, pernicious a thing.

8. The nearness to us, also, is an aggravation. It is not a distant evil, but in our bowels, in our very hearts : we are bound so strictly to love ourselves, that it is a great aggravation to do ourselves so great a mischief.

9. The constant inhesion of sin, is a great aggravation :

that it is ever with us, lying down and rising up, at home and abroad; we are never free from it.

10. That it should poison all our common mercies, and corrupt all our duties, is an aggravation. But we shall take up some of these anon.

The special aggravations of the sins of God's own children are these¹.

1. They sin against a nearer relation than others do; even against that God that is their Father by the new birth, which is more heinous than if a stranger did it.

2. They are Christ's own members; and it is most unnatural for his members to rebel against him, or do him wrong.

3. They sin against more excellent operations of the Spirit than others do, and against a principle of life within them.

4. They sin against the differencing grace, which appeared in their conversion. God took them out of a world of sinners, whom he passed by when he could as well have sanctified them. And should they so quickly thus requite him?

5. They sin against the pardon and justification which they have already received. Did God so lately forgive them all their former debts; so many, so great, and heinous sins, and that so freely to them, when the procurement was so dear to Christ? and should they so soon forget, or so ill requite so great a mercy?

6. They sin against a more serious covenant, which at their conversion they entered into with God, than other men do.

7. They sin against all the heart-breaking or humbling sorrows which they have tasted of at their conversion, and since. They have known more of the evil of sin than others, and their sad experience of its sting.

8. They sin against more knowledge than other men. They have known more what sin is, and what Christ is, and what the will of God is than others; and therefore deserve to be beaten with many stripes.

9. They have oftener confessed sin than others, and spoke

¹ See the Assemblies larger Catechism about Aggravations of Sin.

odiously of it, as the vilest thing, and aggravated it to God and man.

10. Their many prayers against it, and all their labour in hearing, and reading, and sacraments, and other means, do aggravate it.

11. They make a greater profession of strict obedience, and therefore sin against their own profession.

12. They have renewed their promises of obedience to God, in prayer, at sacraments, and at other times, much more than others.

13. They have had more experience than others, of the goodness of obedience, and of the comforts and benefits that attend it, in the favour of God, and communion with him therein.

14. Their sins are aggravated, by all the reproofs and exhortations which they have used to others, to tell them how unreasonable and bad it is to provoke the Lord.

15. They sin under greater hopes of glory than others do; and provoke that God with whom they hope to live for ever.

16. The high titles of love and praise which God doth give them in his Word, do aggravate their sin. That he should call them his treasure, his peculiar people, his jewels, and the apple of his eye, his sons and daughters, and a holy people, and priests to God, and boast of them as a people more excellent than their neighbours; and after this they should sin against him.

17. They have had audience with God, the answer of prayers, and many a deliverance and mercy in this life, which others have not, which aggravate their sins, as being thus contemned, and as obliging them more to God than others.

18. They dishonour God, more than any others, by their sins. His honour lieth not so much upon the actions of the ungodly, as on those that are nearest to him.

19. They harden the wicked more, than such sins in other men would do. They cause them to blaspheme, and reproach the godly for their sakes, and say 'These are your religious men! You see now what their strictness is.' And they hinder the conversion and salvation of others: they

grieve the godly, and wrong the church and cause of God, much more than the sins of others do.

20. Lastly, They please the devil more than the sins of other men. How busy is he to have drawn a Job to sin! and how would he have boasted against God, and his grace, and his servants, if he had prevailed? when he boasted so much before, in the false presumption of his success? As if he could make the godly forsake God, and be as bad as others, if he have leave to tempt them.

II. I shall next give you some particular Directions, besides those foregoing, to help you to think of sin as it is, that you may hate it: for your cleansing and cure consist in this: so far as you hate sin it is mortified, and you are cured of it. And therefore as I have anatomized it, that you may see the hatefulness of it, I shall direct you to improve this for your cure.

Direct. i. ‘Labour to know God, and to be affected with his attributes, and always to live as in his sight.’—No man can know sin perfectly, because no man can know God perfectly. You can no further know what sin is than you know what God is, whom you sin against. For the formal malignity of sin is relative, as it is against the will and attributes of God. The godly have some knowledge of the malignity of sin, because they have some knowledge of God that is wronged by it. The wicked have no practical, prevalent knowledge of the malignity of sin, because they have no such knowledge of God. They that fear God will fear sinning; they that in their hearts are bold, irreverently with God will, in heart and life, be bold with sin: the atheist that thinketh there is no God thinks there is no sin against him. Nothing in the world will tell us so plainly and powerfully of the evil of sin, as the knowledge of the greatness, wisdom, goodness, holiness, authority, justice, truth, &c. of God. The sense of his presence, therefore, will revive our sense of sin’s malignity.

Direct. ii. ‘Consider well of the office, the bloodshed, and the holy life of Christ.’—His office is to expiate sin, and to destroy it. His blood was shed for it: his life condemned it. Love Christ, and thou wilt hate that which caused his death. Love him, and thou wilt love to be made like him,

and hate that which is contrary to Christ. These two great lights will shew the odiousness of darkness.

Direct. iii. ‘Think well both how holy the office and work of the Holy Ghost is, and how great a mercy it is to us.’—Shall God himself, the heavenly light, come down into a sinful heart, to illuminate and purify it? And yet shall I keep my darkness and defilement, in opposition to such wonderful mercy? Though all sin against the Holy Ghost be not the unpardonable blasphemy, yet all is aggravated hereby.

Direct. iv. ‘Know and consider the wonderful love and mercy of God, and think what he hath done for you; and you will hate sin, and be ashamed of it.’—It is an aggravation which makes sin odious even to common reason and ingenuity, that we should offend a God of infinite goodness, who hath filled up our lives with mercy. It will grieve you if you have wronged an extraordinary friend: his love and kindness will come into your thoughts, and make you angry with your own unkindness. Here look over the catalogue of God’s mercies to you, for soul and body. And here observe that satan, in hiding the love of God from you, and tempting you under pretence of humility to deny his greatest, special mercy, doth seek to destroy your repentance and humiliation also, by hiding the greatest aggravation of your sin.

Direct. v. ‘Think what the soul of man is made for, and should be used to, even to love, obey, and glorify our Maker: and then you will see what sin is, which disableth and perverteth it.’—How excellent, and high, and holy a work are we created for and called to? And should we defile the temple of God? and serve the devil in filthiness and folly, where we should entertain, and serve, and magnify our Creator?

Direct. vi. ‘Think well what pure and sweet delights a holy soul may enjoy from God, in his holy service: and then you will see what sin is, which robbeth him of these delights, and preferreth fleshly lusts before them.’—O how happily might we perform every duty? and how fruitfully might we serve our Lord? and what delight should we find in his love and acceptation, and the foresight of everlasting

blamedness, if it were not for sin? which bringeth down the soul from the doors of heaven, to wallow with swine in a beloved dunghill.

Direct. vii. ‘Bethink you what a life it is which you must live for ever, if you live in heaven; and what a life the holy ones there now live: and then think whether sin, which is so contrary to it, be not a vile and hateful thing?’—Either you would live in heaven, or not. If not, you are not those I speak to. If you would, you know that there is no sinning; no worldly mind; no pride; no passion; no fleshly lust or pleasures there. Oh, did you but see and hear one hour, how those blessed spirits are taken up in loving and magnifying the glorious God in purity and holiness, and how far they are from sin, it would make you loathe sin ever after, and look on sinners as on men in Bedlam wallowing naked in their dung. Especially, to think that you hope yourselves to live for ever like those holy spirits; and therefore sin doth ill beseem you.

Direct. viii. ‘Look but to the state and torment of the damned, and think well of the difference betwixt angels and devils, and you may know what sin is.’—Angels are pure; devils are polluted: holiness and sin do make the difference. Sin dwells in hell, and holiness in heaven. Remember that every temptation is from the devil, to make you like himself; as every holy motion is from Christ, to make you like himself. Remember when you sin, that you are learning and imitating of the devil, and are so far like him^m. And the end of all is, that you may feel his pains. If hell-fire be not good, then sin is not good.

Direct. ix. ‘Look always on sin as one that is ready to lie, and consider how all men judge of it at the last.’—What do men in heaven say of it? and what do men in hell say of it? and what do men at death say of it? and what do converted souls, or awakened consciences, say of it? Is it then followed with delight and fearlessness as it is now? is it then applauded? will any of them speak well of it? Nay, all the world speaks evil of sin in the general now, even when they love and commit the several acts. Will you sin when you are dying?

Direct. x. ‘Look always on sin and judgment together.’

^m John viii. 44.

—Remember that you must answer for it before God, and angels, and all the world; and you will the better know it.

Direct. xi. ‘Look now but upon sickness, poverty, shame, despair, death, and rottenness in the grave, and it may a little help you to know what sin is.’—These are things within your sight or feeling; you need not faith to tell you of them. And by such effects you might have some little knowledge of the cause.

Direct. xii. ‘Look but upon some eminent, holy persons upon earth, and upon the mad, profane, malignant world; and the difference may tell you in part what sin is.’—Is there not an amiableness in a holy, blameless person, that liveth in love to God and man, and in the joyful hopes of life eternal? Is not a beastly drunkard or whoremonger, and a raging swearer, and malicious persecutor, a very deformed, loathsome creature? Is not the mad, confused, ignorant, ungodly state of the world a very pitiful sight? What then is the sin that all this doth consist in?

Though the principal part of the cure is in turning the will to the hatred of sin, and is done by this discovery of its malignity; yet I shall add a few more Directions for the executive part, supposing that what is said already has had its effect.

Direct. i. ‘When you have found out your disease and danger, give up yourselves to Christ as the Saviour and Physician of souls, and to the Holy Ghost as your Sanctifier, remembering that he is sufficient and willing to do the work which he hath undertaken.’—It is not you that are to be Saviours and Sanctifiers of yourselves (unless as you work under Christ). But he that hath undertaken it, doth take for his glory to perform it.

Direct. ii. ‘Yet must you be willing and obedient in applying the remedies prescribed you by Christ, and observing his directions in order to your cure.’—And you must not be tender, and coy, and finical, and say, This is too bitter, and that is too sharp; but trust his love, and skill, and care, and take it as he prescribeth it, or giveth it you, without any more ado. Say not, It is grievous, and I cannot take it: for he commands you nothing but what is safe, and wholesome, and necessary; and if you cannot take it, you

must try whether you can bear your sickness, and death, and the fire of hell ! Are humiliation, confession, restitution, mortification, and holy diligence worse than hell ?

Direct. III. ‘ See that you take not part with sin, and wrangle not, or strive not against your Physician, or any that would do you good.’—Excusing sin, and pleading for and extenuating it, and striving against the Spirit and conscience, and wrangling against ministers and godly friends, and hating reproof, are not the means to be cured and sanctified.

Direct. IV. ‘ See that malignity in every one of your particular sins, which you can see and say is in sin in general.’—It is a gross deceit of yourselves, if you will speak a great deal of the evil of sin, and see none of this malignity in your pride, and your worldliness, and your passion, and peevishness, and your malice, and uncharitableness, and your lying, backbiting, slandering, or sinning against conscience for worldly commodity or safety. What self-contradiction is it for a man in prayer to aggravate sin, and when he is reproved for it, to justify or excuse it ? For a popish priest to enter sinfully upon his place, by subscribing or swearing the Trent Confession, and then to preach zealously against sin in the general, as if he had never committed so horrid a crime ? This is like him that will speak against treason, and the enemies of the king, but because the traitors are his friends and kindred, will protect, or hide them, and take their parts.

Direct. V. ‘ Keep as far as you can from those temptations which feed and strengthen the sins which you would overcome.’—Lay siege to your sins, and starve them out, by keeping away the food and fuel which is their maintenance and life.

Direct. VI. ‘ Live in the exercise of those graces and duties which are contrary to the sins which you are most in danger of.’—For grace and duty are contrary to sin, and killeth it, and cureth us of it, as the fire cureth us of cold, or health of sickness.

Direct. VII. ‘ Hearken not to weakening unbelief and distrust, and cast not away the comforts of God, which are your cordials and strength.’—It is not a frightful, dejected, despairing frame of mind, that is fittest to resist sin ; but it

is the encouraging sense of the love of God, and thankful sense of grace received (with a cautelous fear).

Direct. viii. 'Be always suspicious of carnal self-love, and watch against it.'—For that is the burrow or fortress of sin; and the common patron of it; ready to draw you to it, and ready to justify it. We are very prone to be partial in our own cause; as the case of Judah with Tamar, and David when Nathan reprov'd him in a parable, shew. Our own passions, our own pride, our own censures, or back-bitings, or injurious dealings; our own neglects of duty, seem small, excusable, if not justifiable things to us; whereas we could easily see the faultiness of all these in another, especially in an enemy: when yet we should be best acquainted with ourselves and we should most love ourselves, and therefore hate our own sins most.

Direct. ix. 'Bestow your first and chiefest labour to kill sin at the root: to cleanse the heart, which is the fountain; for out of the heart cometh the evils of the life.'—Know which are the master-roots; and bend your greatest care and industry to mortify those: and they are especially these that follow; 1. Ignorance. 2. Unbelief. 3. Inconsiderateness. 4. Selfishness and Pride. 5. Fleshliness, in pleasing a brutish appetite, lust or fantasy. 6. Senseless hardness and sleepiness in sin.

Direct. x. 'Account the world and all its pleasures, wealth and honours, no better than indeed they are, and then satan will find no bait to catch you.'—Esteem all as dung with Paul; and no man will sin, and sell his soul, for that which he accounteth but as dung.

Direct. xi. 'Keep up above in a heavenly conversation, and then your souls will be always in the light, and as in the sight of God, and taken up with those businesses and delights, which put them out of relish with the baits of sin.'

Direct. xii. 'Let Christian watchfulness be your daily work; and cherish a preserving, though not a distracting and discouraging fear.'

Direct. xiii. 'Take heed of the first approaches and beginnings of sin. Oh how great a matter doth a little of this fire kindle! And if you fall, rise quickly by sound repentance, whatever it may cost you.'

Direct. xiv. ‘ Make God’s Word your only rule: and labour diligently to understand it.’

Direct. xv. ‘ And in doubtful cases, do not easily depart from the unanimous judgment of the generality of the most wise and godly of all ages.’

Direct. xvi. ‘ In doubtful cases be not passionate or rash, but proceed deliberately, and prove things well, before you fasten on them.’

Direct. xvii. ‘ Be acquainted with your bodily temperature, and what sin it most inclineth you to, or what sin also your calling or converse doth lay you most open to, that there your watch may be the stricter. (Of all which I shall speak more fully under the next *Grand Direction*.)

Direct. xviii. ‘ Keep in a life of holy order, such as God hath appointed you to walk in. For there is no preservation for stragglers that keep not rank and file, but forsake the order which God commanded them.’—And this order lieth principally in these points: 1. That you keep in union with the universal church. Separate not from Christ’s body upon any pretence whatever. With the church as regenerate, hold spiritual communion, in faith, love and holiness: with the church as congregate and visible, hold outward communion in profession, and worship. 2. If you are not teachers, live under your particular, faithful pastors, as obedient disciples of Christ. 3. Let the most godly, if possible, be your familiars. 4. Be laborious in an outward calling.

Direct. xix. ‘ Turn all God’s providences, whether of prosperity or adversity, against your sins.’—If he give you health and wealth, remember he thereby obligeth you to obedience, and calls for special service from you. If he afflict you, remember that it is sin that he is offended at, and searcheth after; and therefore take it as his physic, and see that you hinder not, but help on its work, that it may purge away your sin.

Direct. xx. ‘ Wait patiently on Christ till he have finished the cure, which will not be till this trying life be finished.’—Persevere in attendance on his Spirit and means; for he will come in season, and will not tarry. “ Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: his going forth is prepared as the morning, and he shall come unto us as

the rain : as the latter and former rain upon the earthⁿ. Though you have oft said, “ There is no healing^a, he will heal your backslidings, and love you freely^p. Unto you that fear his name, shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings^q : and blessed are all they that wait for him^r. ”

Thus I have given such Directions as may help for humiliation under sin, or hatred of it, and deliverance from it.

Grand Direction ix. ‘ Spend all your days in a skilful, vigilant, resolute, and valiant war against the flesh, the world and the devil, as those that have covenanted to follow Christ the Captain of your Salvation.’

The flesh is the end of temptation, for all is to please it, and therefore is the greatest enemy. The world is the matter of temptation : and the devil is the first mover, or efficient of it ; and this is the trinity of enemies to Christ and us, which we renounce in baptism, and must constantly resist. Of the world and flesh, I shall speak chap. iv. Here I shall open the methods of the devil. And first I shall prepare your understanding, by opening some presupposed truths.

1. It is presupposed, that there is a devil. He that believeth not this, doth prove it to others, by shewing how grossly the devil can befool him. Apparitions, witchcrafts, and temptations, are full proofs of it to sense ; besides what Scripture saith.

2. It is supposed that he is the deadly enemy of Christ and us. He was once an angel, and fell from his first estate by sin, and a world of evil spirits with him ; and it is probable his envy against mankind might be the greater, as knowing that we were made to succeed him and his followers, in their state of glory : for Christ saith, that we shall “ be equal with the angels.” He shewed his enmity to man in our innocency, and by his temptation caused our fall and misery. But after the fall, God put an enmity into the nature of man against devils, as a merciful preservative against temptation : so that as the whole nature of man ab-

ⁿ Hosea vi. 3.

^o Jer. xiv. 19.

^p Hosea xiv. 4.

^q Mal. iv. 2.

^r Isa. xxx. 18.

* See my Treatise of “ Crucifying the World, and of Self-Denial.”

horreth the nature of serpents, so doth the soul abhor and dread the diabolical nature. And therefore so far as the devil is seen in a temptation now, so far it is frustrated ; till the enmity in nature be overcome by his deceits : and this help nature hath against temptation, which it seems our nature had not before the fall, as not knowing the malice of the devil against us ^t.

There is a natural enmity to the devil himself put into all the woman's natural seed : but the moral enmity against his sinful temptations and works, is put only into the spiritual seed by the Holy Ghost (except what remnants are in the light of nature). I will be brief of all this and the next, having spoken of them more largely in my "Treatise against Infidelity," Part iii.

The devil's names do tell us what he is. In the Old Testament he is called, 1. The 'Serpent,' Gen. iii. 2. The Hebrew word translated 'devils,' in Levit. xvii. 7. and Isa. xiii. 21. signifieth hairy, as satyrs are described : and sometimes he-goats ; because in such shapes he oft appeareth. 3. He is called 'Satan,' Zech. iii. 1. 4. 'An evil Spirit,' 1 Sam. xviii. 10. 5. 'A lying Spirit,' 1 Kings xxii. 22. For he 'is a liar, and the father of lies,' John viii. 44. 6. His offspring is called 'A Spirit of uncleanness,' Zach. xiii. 2. 7. And he (or his spawn) is called 'A Spirit of fornication,' Hos. iv. 12. that is, idolatry. 8. 'A perverse Spirit, causing staggering and giddiness as a drunken man,' Isa. xix. 14.

In the New Testament, 1. He is sometimes called simply 'A Spirit,' Mark ix. 20, 26. Luke ix. 39. x. 20. 2. Sometimes πνεύματα ἀκάθαρα, 'unclean Spirits,' Luke vi. 18. as contrary to the Holy Spirit ; and that from their nature and effects. 3. And after Δαίμονον, 'Demons,' a word taken in a good sense in heathen writers, but not in Scripture ; because they worshipped devils under that name, (unless perhaps Acts xvii. 18. 1 Tim. iv. 1.) And Δαίμων with respect to their knowledge, and as some think to the knowledge promised to Adam, in the temptation. 4. Πειράζων, 'the

^t Of the Temptations to hinder Conversion, see before, chap. i.

^u Vide Pool's Synopsis Critic. in Levit. i. 17. In these latter the word 'Spirit' signifieth the ill disposition, which satan as a tempter causeth, and so he is known by it as his offspring.

Tempter,' Matt. iv. 5. 'Satan,' Matt. iv. 1 Pet. v. 8. 6. *ἐχθρός*, 'An Enemy,' Matt. xiii. 28. 39. 7. 'The strong man armed,' Matt. xii. 8. 'Angels,' 1 Cor. vi. 3. 2 Pet. ii. 4. 'Angels which kept not their first state,' Jude vi. 9. 'A Spirit of divination,' Acts xvi. 16. 10. 'A roaring lion,' 1 Pet. v. 8. 11. 'A murderer,' John viii. 44. 12. 'Belial,' 2 Cor. vi. 15. 13. 'Beelzebub,' Matt. xii. the 'god of flies.' 14. 'The prince of this world,' John xii. 21., from his power over wicked men. 15. 'The god of this world,' 2 Cor. iv. 5., because the world obey him. 16. 'The prince of the power of the air,' Ephes. ii. 2. 17. 'The ruler of the darkness of this world,' Ephes. vi. 12. 'Principalities and powers.' 18. 'The father of the wicked,' John viii. 44. 19. 'The dragon, and the old serpent,' Rev. xii. 20. *Δι-βολος*, 'the calumniator' or 'false accuser,' often. 21. *ὁ πονηρός*, 'the evil one,' Matt. xxiii. 19. 22. 'An evil spirit,' Acts xix. 15. 23. *Ἀρράδων*, 'the destroyer,' and 'Abaddon,' the 'king of the locusts,' and 'angel of the bottomless-pit,' Rev. ix. 11., (unless that speak of anti-christ.)

3. He is too strong an enemy for lapsed, sinful man to deal with of himself. If he conquered us in innocency, what may he do now? He is dangerous, (1.) By the greatness of his subtlety. (2.) By the greatness of his power. (3.) By the greatness of his malice: and hence, (4.) By his constant diligence; watching when we sleep^a, and "seeking night and day to devour^b."

4. Therefore Christ hath engaged himself in our cause, and is become the "Captain of our salvation^c." And the world is formed into two armies, that lies in continual war: the devil is the prince and general of one, and his angels and wicked men are his armies: Christ is the king and general of the other, and his angels^d, and saints are his army. Between these two armies, are the greatest conflicts in the world^e.

5. It is supposed also that this war is carried on, on both sides, within us, and without us; by inward solicitations, and outward means, which are fitted thereunto.

^a Matt. xiii. 25.

^b 1 Pet. v. 8. Rev. xii. 4.

^c Heb. ii. 10.

^d Heb. ii. 14.

^e See my Treatise against Infidelity, as before cited.

6. Both Christ and satan work by officers, instruments, and means. Christ hath his ministers to preach his Gospel, and pull down the kingdom of satan. And satan hath his ministers to preach licentiousness and lies, and to resist the Gospel and kingdom of Christ^f. Christ hath his church, and the devil hath his synagogue. Christ's soldiers do every one, in their places, fight for him against the devil. And the devil's soldiers do every one, in their places, fight against Christ. The generals are both unseen to mortals : and the unseen power is theirs : but their agents are visible. The soldiers fight, not only against the generals, but against one another ; but it is all, or chiefly, for the generals' sakes. It is Christ that the wicked persecute in his servants^g ; and it is the devil whom the godly hate and resist in the wicked. . . . But yet here are divers notable differences. 1. The devil's servants do not what they do in love to him, but to their own flesh ; but Christ's servants do what they do in love to him, as well as to themselves. 2. The devil's army are cheated into arms and war, not knowing what they do ; but Christ doth all in the open light, and will have no servants, but those that deliberately adhere to him, when they know the worst. 3. The devil's servants do not know that he is their general ; but Christ's followers do all know their Lord. 4. The devil's followers disown their master and their work : they will not own that they fight against Christ and his kingdom, while they do it ; but Christ's followers own their Captain, and his cause, and work ; for he is not a master to be ashamed of.

7. Both Christ and satan work persuasively, by moral means, and neither of them by constraint and force. Christ forceth not men against their wills to good, and satan cannot force them to be bad ; but all the endeavour is, to make men willing ; and he is the conqueror that getteth and keepeth our own consent.

8. Their ends are contrary, and therefore their ways are also contrary. The devil's end is, to draw man to sin and to damnation, and to dishonour God : and Christ's end is, to draw men from sin, to holiness and salvation, and to honour God. But Christ maketh known his end, and satan concealeth his end from his followers.

^f 1 Cor. iii. 5. iv. 1. 2 Cor. ii. 15. Acts. xiii. 8—10.

^g Acts ix. 4.

9. There is somewhat within the good and bad for the contrary part to work upon : and we are, as it were, divided in ourselves, and have somewhat in us that is on both sides. The wicked have an honourable acknowledgment of God, and of their greatest obligation to him ; a hatred to the devil ; a love of themselves ; a willingness to be happy ; and, an unwillingness to be miserable ; and a conscience which approveth of more good than they do, and condemneth much of their transgression. This is some advantage to the persuasions of the ministers of Christ to work upon : and they have reason capable of knowing more.

The soldiers of Christ have a fleshly appetite, and the remnants of ignorance and error in their minds, and of earthliness, and carnality, and averseness to God in their wills ; with a nearness to this world, and much strangeness to the world to come. And here is too much advantage for satan to work on by his temptations.

10. But it is the predominant part within us, and the scope of our lives which shew which of the armies we belong to. And thus we must give up our names and hearts to Christ, and engage, under his conduct, against the devil, and conquer to the death, if we will be saved. Not to fight against the bare name of the devil ; for so will his own soldiers, and spit at his name, and hang a witch that makes a contract with him : but it is to fight against his cause and work, which is by fighting against the world and the flesh, and for the glory of God.

In opening to you this holy war, I shall First, Shew you what we must do on the offensive part : Secondly, What on the defensive part. And here I shall shew you, I. What it is that the tempter aimeth at as his end. II. What matter or ground he worketh upon. III. What are his succours and assistance. IV. What kind of officers and instruments he useth. V. What are his methods and actual temptations, 1. To actual sin : 2. Against our duty to God.

First, Our offensive arms are to be used, 1. Against the power of sin within us ; and all its advantages and helps : for while satan ruleth and possesseth us within, we shall never well oppose him without. 2. Against sin in others, as far as we have opportunity. 3. Against the credit and honour of sin in the world. As the devil's servants would

bring light and holiness into disgrace, so Christ's servants must cast disgrace and shame upon sin and darkness. 4. Against all the reasonings of sinners, and their subtle fallacies, whereby they would deceive. 5. Against the passions and violent lusts, which are the causes of men's other sins. 6. Against the holds and helps of sin, as false teachers, profane revilers, ignorance, and deceit. Only take heed, that on this pretence we step not out of our ranks and places, to pull down the powers of the world by rebellions: "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal."

Secondly, As to our defence, I. The ends of the tempter which must be perceived, are these: 1. In general, his aim is at our utter ruin and damnation, and to draw us here to dishonour God as much as he can. But, especially, his aim is, to strengthen the great heart-sins, which are most mortal, and are the root, and life, and spawners of the rest: especially these, 1. Ignorance, which is the friend and cloak to all the rest. 2. Error, which will justify them. 3. Unbelief, which keeps off all that should oppose them. 4. Atheism, profaneness, unholiness, which are the defiance of God and all his armies. 5. Presumption, which emboldeneth them, and hides the danger. 6. Hardness of heart, which fortifieth them against all the batteries of grace. 7. Hypocrisy, which maketh them serve him as spies and intelligencers in the army of Christ. 8. Disaffection to God, and his ways and servants, which is the devil's colours. 9. Unthankfulness, which tends to make them unreconcilable and unrecoverable. 10. Pride, which commandeth many regiments of lesser sins. 11. Worldliness, or love of money and wealth, which keepeth his armies in pay. 12. Sensuality, voluptuousness, or flesh-pleasing, which is the great commander of all the rest^b. For selfishness is the devil's lieutenant-general, which consisteth chiefly in the three last named; but especially in pride and sensuality. Some think that it is outward sins that bring all the danger; but these twelve heart-sins, which I have named to you, are the twelve gates of the infernal city, which satan loveth above all the rest.

II. The matter and grounds of his temptations are these, 1. The devil first worketh upon the outward sense, and so

^b *Animi molles et ætate fluxi, dolis haud difficulter capiuntur.*

upon the sensitive appetite. He sheweth the cup to the drunkard's eye; and the bait of filthy lust to the fornicator; and the riches and pomp of the world to the covetous and proud: the glutton tasteth the sweetness of the dish which he loveth: stage-plays, and tempting sports, and proud attire, and sumptuous buildings, and all such sensual things are the baits by which the devil angleth for souls. Thus Eve first saw the fruit, and then tasted, and then did eat. Thus Noah, and Lot, and David sinned. Thus Achan saith, "I saw (the garments, silver, and gold) I coveted them, and I took them¹." The sense is the door of sin.

2. The tempter next worketh on the fantasy or imagination, and prints upon it the loveliest image of his bait that possibly he can, and engageth the sinner to think on it, and roll it over and over in his mind, even as God commandeth us to meditate on his precepts.

3. Next he worketh by these upon the passions or affections: which fancy having inflamed, they violently urge the will and reason; and this according to the nature of the passion, whether fear or hope, sorrow or joy, love or hatred, desire or aversion; but by none doth he work so dangerously as by delight, and love, and desire of things sensual.

4. Hence he proceedeth to infect the will (upon the simple apprehension of the understanding), to make it inordinately cleave to the temporal good, and to neglect its duty in commanding the understanding to meditate on preserving objects, and to call off the thoughts from the forbidden thing: it neglecteth to rule the thoughts and passions according to its office and natural power.

5. And so he corrupteth the understanding itself, first to omit its duty, and then to entertain deceit, and to approve of evil: and so the servant is put into the government, and the commanding powers do but serve it. Reason is blinded by sensuality and passion, and becomes their servant, and pleads their cause.

By all this it appeareth, 1. That satan's first bait is ordinarily some sensible or imaginary good, set up against true spiritual good. 2. That his first assault of the reason and will is to tempt them into a sluggish neglect and neutrality, to omit that restraint of sense, thought, and passion,

¹ Jos. vii. 21.

which was their duty. 3. And that, lastly, he tempteth them into actual compliance and committing of the sin : and herein, 1. The bait which he useth with the understanding is still ‘some seeming truth.’ And, therefore, his art and work is to colour falsehood, and make it seem truth ; for this is the deceiving of the mind : and therefore for a sinner to plead his mistake for his excuse, and say, ‘I thought it had been so or so ; I thought it had been no sin, or no duty ;’ this is but to confess, and not to excuse : it is but as much as to say, ‘My understanding sinned with my will, and was deceived by the tempter and overcome.’ 2. And the bait which he useth with the will is always some appearing good : and self-love and love of good is the principle which he abuseth, and maketh his ground to work upon ; as God also useth it in drawing us to good.

III. The succours and auxiliaries of the devil, and his principal means are these : 1. He doth what he can to get an ill-tempered body on his side ; for as sin did let in bodily distempers, so do they much befriend the sin that caused them. A choleric temper will much help him to draw men to passion, malice, murder, cruelty, and revenge. A sanguine and bilious temper mixed, will help him to draw men to lust, and filthiness, and levity, and wantonness, and time-wasting pleasures : a sanguine temper mixed with a pituitous, much helpeth him to make men blockish, and regardless, and insensible of the great concernments of the soul : a phlegmatic temper helpeth him to draw people to drowsy sluggishness, and to an idle, slothful life, and so to ill means to maintain it, and to a backwardness to every work that is good. A healthful temper much helpeth him to draw people to gluttony, drunkenness, lust, ambition, covetousness, neglect of life eternal. a sickly temper helpeth him to tempt us to peevishness and impatience : and a melancholy temper helpeth him in all the temptations mentioned but even now.

2. He useth his greatest skill to get the greatest fleshly interest on his side : so that it may be a matter of great pleasure, great advancement, and honour, and applause, or great commodity to a man, if he will sin ; or a matter of great suffering, and great disgrace, and great loss to him that will not sin, or that will be holy and obedient to God :

for fleshly interest being the common matter of all his temptations, his main business is to magnify this as much as may be.

3. He maketh very great advantage of the common customs of the country that men live in: this carrieth away thousands and millions at once. When the common vote and custom are for sin, and against Christ and holiness, particular persons think themselves excused, that they are no wiser, or better than all the country about them. And they think they are much the safer for sinning in so great a crowd, and doing but as most men do; and he that contradicteth them cometh on great disadvantage in their eye, when he is to oppose an army of adversaries, and seemeth to think himself wiser than so many.

4. Also he is exceeding industrious to get education on his side; he knoweth how apt men are to retain the form which they were moulded or cast into at first: if he get the first possession, by actual as well as original sin, he is not easily cast out. Especially when education doth conspire with common custom, it delivereth most of the people and kingdoms of the earth into his hands.

5. Also he is industrious to get the approved doctrine of the teachers of the people on his side. If he can get it to pass once for a revelation or command of God, he will quickly conquer conscience by it, and take down all resistance: he never doth war more successfully against God, than when he beareth the name of God in his colours, and fighteth against him in his own name. Mahometans, Jews, Papists, and all heretics are the trophies and monuments of his victories by this way. Mischief is never so much revered, nor proceedeth so successfully, as when it is made a religion! When the devil can charge men to do his business in the name of God, and upon pain of damnation, he hath got the strongest weapons that ever he can make use of. His ordinary bait is some fleshly pleasure; but he goeth high indeed when he presumeth to offer the everlasting pleasures; he tempted Christ with all the kingdoms and glory of the world; but he tempteth many millions of souls with the offers of the kingdom of heaven itself. For he will offer it to them that he is endeavouring to keep from it, and make it the bait to draw men from it into the way to hell.

6. He is exceeding diligent to get the wealth and prosperity of the world on his side : that he may not seem to flatter his servants with empty promises, but to reward them with real felicity and wealth. And then he would make the sinner believe that Christ is the deceiver, and promiseth a kingdom which none of them ever saw, and which he will not give them ; but that he himself will not deceive them, but make good his promises even in this life without delay : for they see with their eyes the things which he promiseth, and they shall have them presently in possession, to secure them from deceit.

7. He is exceeding industrious to get common fame and reputation on his side : that he may be able to keep his cause in credit, and to keep the cause of Christ and holiness in disgrace. For he knoweth how exceeding prone men are to fall into the way of honour and esteem, and which most men praise ; and how loath they are to go in the way which is hated and evil spoken of by the most of men.

8. He is very diligent to get the sword and government of kingdoms, and states, and countries, and cities, and corporations into his hands, or on his side ; for he knoweth the multitude of the ignorant and vulgar people are exceedingly prone to be of the religion of those that are able to help or hurt them, and to follow the stronger side : and that the will and example of the ruler is as the first sheet or stamp, which all the rest are printed after. Therefore he will do his worst, to give the greatest power to the most ungodly : if the Turk be the emperor, the most of the vulgar are like quickly to be Turks ; if a Papist be their king, the most of them are likely to be Papists. Look into the present state of the Heathen, Infidel, Mahometan, Papal, and profane parts of the world, and into the history of all ages past, and you will see with grief and admiration how much the devil hath got by this.

9. Also he is very desirous to get our society and companions on his side, who are near to us, and have frequent opportunities to do us good or hurt. For he knoweth by long and great experience how powerfully they draw, and how frequently they speed.

10. And he is very industrious to get our friends that

have power over us, and greatest interest in us, on his side. For then he hath won our outworks already.

11. Lastly, He is desirous sometimes to get the name and appearance of virtue and piety on his side: that those that are to do his work may have a winning carriage, and so a venerable name, and the cloak of virtue may serve his turn for the promoting of the destruction of piety itself.

IV. By what hath been said, you may understand what kind of officers and instruments the tempter useth. 1. He commonly useth men that are themselves first deceived and corrupted, as fit instruments to deceive and corrupt others. These will carry it on with confidence and violence; the employment seemeth natural to them, they are so fit for it: they will be willing to make other men of their mind, and to have the company of others in their way. A drunkard is fit to make a drunkard; and a filthy fornicator to entice another into the sin; and a gamester to make a gamester; and a wanton time-waster to draw another to waste his time in wantonness and foolish sports: an ambitious or proud person is fit to kindle that fire in others: a swearer is fittest to make a swearer; and so of many other sins.

2. The devil usually chooseth for his instruments men that have no great tenderness of conscience, or fear of sinning, or of hurting souls. He would have no such cowards in his army, as men fearing God are as to his ends: it must be men that will venture upon hell themselves, and fear not much the loss of their own souls; and therefore must not be too tender or fearful of destroying others. Butchers and soldiers must not be chosen out of too tender or loving sort of people; such are not fit to go through his work.

3. He usually chooseth instruments that are most deeply engaged in his cause; whose preferment, and honour, and gain, and carnal interest shall be to them, as nature is to a dog, or wolf, or fox, or other ravenous creature: who think it a loss, or danger, or suffering to them, if others be not hindered in good, or made as bad as they. Thus Demetrius and the other craftsmen that lived upon the trade are the fittest to plead Diana's cause, and stir up the people against the apostles^k. And the Jews were the fittest instruments to persecute Christ, who thought that if they "let him alone, all men would believe on him, and the Romans

^k Acts xix. 24, 38, 39.

would come and take away both their place and nation ; and that it was expedient for them that one man die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not¹." And Pilate was the fittest instrument to condemn him, who feared that he should else be taken to be none of Cæsar's friend. And Pharaoh was the fittest instrument to persecute the Israelites, who was like to lose by their departure.

4. When he can he chooseth such instruments as are much about us and nearest to us, who have an opportunity to be often speaking to us, when others have no opportunity to help us : the fire that is nearest to the wood or thatch is more likely to burn it than that which is far off : nearness and opportunity are very great advantages.

5. If it be possible, he will choose such instruments as have the greatest abilities to do him service : one man of great wit, and learning, and elocution, that is nimble in disputing, and can make almost any cause seem good which he defendeth, or bad which he opposeth, is able to do more service for the devil than an hundred idiots.

6. If possible, he will choose the rulers of the world to be his instruments ; that shall command men, and threaten them with imprisonment, banishment, confiscation, or death, if they will not sin : as the king of Babylon did by the three witnesses and Daniel^m : and all persecutors have done in all ages, against the holy seed. For he knoweth, that (though not with a Job, yet with a carnal person) "skin for skin, and all that a man hath will he give for his life." And therefore, they that have the power of life, and liberty, and estate, have carnal men by the handle that will rule them.

7. He maketh the rich his instruments ; that, having the wealth of the world, are able to reward and hire evil doers ; and are able to oppress those that will not please them. Landlords and rich men can do the devil more service than many of the poor : they are the Judas's that bear the bag. As the ox will follow him that carrieth the hay, and the horse will follow him that carrieth the provender, and the dog will follow him that feedeth him, and the crow will be where the carrion is ; so carnal persons will follow and obey him that bears the purse.

8. The devil, if he can, will make those his instruments,

¹ John xi. 48, 50.

^m Dan. iii. and vi.

whom he seeth we most esteem and reverence: persons whom we think most wise and fit to be our counsellors: we will take that from these, which we would suspect from others.

9. He will get our relations, and those that have our hearts most, to be his instruments. A husband, or a wife, or a Delilah, can do more than any others: and so can a bosom friend, whom we dearly love: when all their interest in our affections is made over for the devil's service, it may do much. Therefore we see that husbands and wives, if they love entirely, do usually close in the same religion, opinion, or way, though when they were first married, they differed from each other.

10. As oft as he can, the devil maketh the multitude his instrument: that the crowd and noise may carry us on, and make men valiant, and put away their fear of punishment.

11. He is very desirous to make the ambassadors of Christ his prisoners, and to hire them to speak against their Master's cause; that, in Christ's name, they may deceive the silly flock, "speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after themⁿ." Sometimes by pretence of his authority and commission, making poor people believe, that not to hear them, and obey them in their errors, is to be disobedient rejecters of Christ; (and thus the Romish party carry it.) Sometimes by their parts, and plausible, persuasive speeches; and sometimes by their fervency, frightening people into error: and by these two ways most heretics prevail. None so successfully serveth satan, as a false or bribed minister of Christ.

12. He is exceeding desirous to make parents themselves his instruments for their children's sin and ruin; and, alas! how commonly doth he succeed! He knoweth that parents have them under their hands, in the most ductile, malleable age; and that they have a concurrence of almost all advantages. They have the purse, and the portion of their children in their power: they have the interest of love, and reverence, and estimation: they are still with them, and can be often in their solicitings: they have the rod and can compel them. Many thousands are in hell, through the means of their own parents; such cruel monsters will they

ⁿ Acts xx. 30.

be to the souls of any others, that are first so to their own. If the devil can get the parents to be cursers, swearers, gamesters, drunkards, worldlings, proud, deriders, or railers at a holy life, what a snare is here for the poor children!

V. In the method of satan, the next thing is to shew you how he labours to keep off all the forces of Christ, which should resist him, and destroy his work, and to frustrate their endeavours, and fortify himself: and, among many others, these means are notable:—

1. He would do what he can to weaken even natural reason, that men may be blockish, and incapable of good. And it is lamentable to observe, how hard it is to make some people either understand or regard. And a beastly kind of education doth much to this: and so doth custom in sensual courses; even turn men into brutes.

2. He doth what he can to hinder parents and masters from doing their part, in the instructing and admonishing of children and servants, and dealing wisely and zealously with them for their salvation. Either he will keep parents and masters ignorant and unable; or he will make them wicked and unwilling, and perhaps, engage them to oppose their children in all that is good; or he will make them like Eli, remiss and negligent, indifferent, formal, cold, and dull; and so keep them from saving their children's or servant's souls.

3. He doth all that possibly he can to keep the sinner in security, presumption, and senselessness, even asleep in sin; and, to that end, to keep him quiet, and in the dark, without any light or noise which may awake him; that he may live asleep as without a God, a Christ, a heaven, a soul, or any such thing to mind. His great care is to keep him from considering: and therefore, he keeps him still in company, or sport, or business, and will not let him be oft alone, nor retire into a sober conference with his conscience, or serious thoughts of the life to come.

4. He doth his best to keep soul-searching, lively ministers out of the country, or out of that place; and to silence them, if there be any such: and to keep the sinner under some ignorant or dead-hearted minister, that hath not himself that faith, or repentance, or life, or love, or holiness, or zeal, which he should be a means to work in others: and

he will do his utmost to draw men to be a leader of men to sin.

5. He doth his worst to make ministers weak, to disgrace the cause of Christ, and hinder his work, by their bungling and unskilful management; that there may be none to stand up against sin, but some unlearned or half-witted men, that can scarce speak sense, or will provoke contempt, or laughter in the hearers.

6. He doth his worst to make ministers scandalous, that, when they tell men of their sin and duty, they may think such mean not as they speak, and believe not themselves, or make no great matter of it, but speak for custom, credit, or for their hire. And that the people, by the wicked lives of the preachers, may be emboldened to disobey their doctrine, and to imitate them, and live without repentance.

7. He will labour to load the ablest ministers with reproaches and slanders, which thousands shall hear, who never hear the truth in their defence: and so making them odious, the people will receive no good more by their preaching, than from a Turk, or Jew, till the very truth itself, for itself prevail. And to this end especially, he doth all that he can to foment continual divisions in the church; that while every party is engaged against the other, the interest of their several causes, may make them think it necessary to make the chief that are against them seem odious, or contemptible to the people; that so they may be able to do their cause and them no harm: and so they disable them from serving Christ and saving souls, that they may disable them to hurt themselves, or their faction, or their impotent cause.

8. He doth what he can to keep the most holy ministers under persecution; that they may be as the wounded deer, whom all the rest of the herd will shun; or like a worried dog whom the rest will fall upon; or that the people may be afraid to hear them, lest they suffer with them; or may come to them only as Nicodemus did to Christ, by night.

9. Or, if any ministers, or godly persons warn the sinner, the devil will do what he can that they may be so small a number, in comparison of those of the contrary mind, that

he may tell the sinner, ‘Dost thou think these few self-conceited fellows, are wiser than such, and such, and all the country? Shall none be saved but such a few precise ones?’ ‘Do any of the Rulers or of the Pharisees believe in him? But this people that knoweth not the law are cursed.’ That is, (as Dr. Hammond noteth,) ‘This illiterate multitude are apt to be seduced, but the teachers are wiser.’

10. The devil doth his worst to cause some falling out, or difference of interest or opinion, between the preacher or monitor, and the sinner; that so he may take him for his enemy. And how unapt men are to receive any advice from an enemy, or adversary, experience will easily convince you.

11. He endeavoureth that powerful preaching may be so rare, and the contradiction of wicked cavillers so frequent, that the sermon may be forgotten, or the impressions of it blotted out, before they can hear another to confirm them, and strike the nail home to the head; and that the fire may go out before the next opportunity come.

12. He laboureth to keep good books out of the sinner’s hands, or keep him from reading them, lest he speed as the eunuch^p, that was reading the Scripture, as he rode in his chariot on the way. And, instead of such books, he putteth romances, and play-books, and trifling, or scorning, contradicting writings into his hands.

13. He doth what he can to keep the sinner from intimate acquaintance with any that are truly godly; that he may know them no otherwise than by the image which ignorant or malicious slanderers or scorers do give of such: and that he may know religion itself but by hearsay, and never see it exemplified in any holy, diligent believers. A holy Christian is a living image of God, a powerful convincer and teacher of the ungodly; and the nearer men come to them, the greater excellency they will see, and the greater efficacy they will feel. Whereas, in the devil’s army, the most must not be seen in the open light, and the hypocrite himself must be seen, like a picture, but by a side-light, and not by a direct.

14. Those means which are used, the devil labours to frustrate, 1. By sluggish heedlessness and disregard. 2.

^p John vii. 48, 49.

^p Acts viii.

By prejudice and false opinions, which prepossess the mind. 3. By diversions of many sorts. 4. By pre-engagements to a contrary interest and way ; so that Christ comes too late for them. 5. By worldly prosperity and delights. 6. By ill company. 7. And by molesting and frightening the sinner, when he doth but take up any purpose to be converted ; giving him all content and quietness in sin, and raising storms and terrors in his soul, when he is about to turn.

The Methods of Christ against the Tempter.

Before I proceed to satan's particular temptations, I will shew you the contrary methods of Christ, in the conduct of his army, and opposing satan.

I. Christ's ends are, ultimately, the glory and pleasing of his Father and himself, and the saving of his church ; and the destroying the kingdom of the devil ; and next, the purifying his peculiar people, and calling home all that are ordained to eternal life.

But more particularly, he looketh principally at the heart to plant there, 1. Holy knowledge. 2. Faith. 3. Godliness, or holy devotedness to God, and love to him above all. 4. Thankfulness. 5. Obedience. 6. Humility. 7. Heavenly-mindedness. 8. Love to others. 9. Self-denial, and mortification, and contentment. 10. Patience. And in all these, 1. Sincerity ; 2. Tenderness of heart ; 3. Zeal, and holy strength, and resolution. And withal, to make us actually serviceable, and diligent in our master's work, for our own and others' salvation.

II. Christ's order in working is direct, and not backward, as the devil's is. He first revealeth saving truth to the understanding, and affecteth the will, by shewing the goodness of the things revealed : and these employ the thoughts, and passions, and senses, and the whole body ; reducing the inferior faculties to obedience, and casting out by degrees, those images which had deceived and prepossessed them.

The matter which Christ presenteth to the soul, is, 1. Certain truth from the Father of lights, set up against the prince and kingdom of darkness, ignorance, error, and deceit. 2. Spiritual and everlasting good, even God him-

self, to be seen, loved, and enjoyed for ever, against the tempter's temporal, corporal, and seeming good. Christ's kingdom and work are advanced by light: he is for the promoting of all useful knowledge; and therefore, for clear and convincing preaching, for reading the Scriptures in an known tongue, and meditating in them day and night, and for exhorting one another daily; which satan is against.

III. The means by which he worketh against satan, are such as these. 1. Sometimes he maketh use of the very temper of the body as a preparative; and (being Lord of all) he giveth such a temperature, as will be most serviceable to the soul: as a sober, deliberate, meek, quiet, and patient disposition. But sometimes he honoureth his grace by the conquest of such sins, as even bodily disposition doth entertain and cherish.

2. Sometimes by his providence, he withdraweth the matter of temptations, that they shall not be too strong for feeble souls: but sometimes his grace doth make advantage of them all, and leave them for the magnifying of its frequent victories.

3. Sometimes he giveth his cause the major vote among the people, so that it shall be a matter of dishonourable singularity, not to be a professed Christian: and sometimes, but exceeding rarely, it is so with the life of godliness and practice of Christianity also. But ordinarily, in the most places of the world, custom and the multitude are against him, and his grace is honoured by prevailing against these bands of satan.

4. He maketh his ministers his principal instruments, qualifying, disposing, and calling them to his work, and helping them in it, and prospering it in their hands.

5. He maketh it the duty of every Christian, to do his part to carry on the work; and furnisheth them with love, and compassion, and knowledge, and zeal in their several measures.

6. He giveth a very strict charge to parents to devote their children, with themselves, to God; encouraging them with the promise of his accepting and blessing them; and commandeth them to teach them the word of God, with greatest diligence, and to bring them up in the nurture and fear of God.

7. He giveth princes and magistrates their power, to promote his kingdom, and protect his servants, and encourage the good, and suppress iniquity, and further the obedience of his laws: though, in most of the world, they turn his enemies, and he carrieth on his work without them, and against their cruel, persecuting opposition.

8. His light detecteth the nakedness of the devil's cause, and among the sons of light, it is odious, and a common shame. And as "wisdom is justified of her children," so the judgment of holy men condemning sin, doth much to keep it under in the world.

9. His providence usually casteth the sinner, that he will do good to, into the bosom and communion of his holy church, and the familiar company and acquaintance of the godly, who may help him by instruction, affection, and example.

10. His providence fitteth all conditions to their good; but especially helpeth by seasonable, quickening afflictions. These are the means which ordinarily he useth. But the powerful, inward operations of his Spirit, give efficacy to them all.

Temptations to particular Sins; with Directions for Preservation and Remedy.

In Chapter i. Part 2. I have opened the temptations which hinder sinners from conversion to God: I shall now proceed to those which draw men to particular sins. Here satan's art is exercised, 1. In fitting his baits to his particular use: 2. In applying them thereto.

Tempt. 1. 'The devil fitteth his temptations to the sinner's age. The same bait is not suitable to all. Children he tempteth to excess of playfulness, lying, disobedience, unwillingness to learn the things that belong to their salvation, and a senselessness of the great concernments of their souls. He tempteth youth to wantonness, rudeness, gulsity, unruliness, and foolish inconsiderateness. In the beginning of manhood he tempteth to lust, voluptuousness, and luxury; or if these take not, to designs of worldliness and ambition. The aged he tempteth to covetousness, and unmoveableness in their error, and unteachableness and

obstinacy in their ignorance and sin: thus every age hath its peculiar snare.'

Direct. 1. The remedy against this is, 1. To be distinctly acquainted with the temptations of your own age: and watch against them with a special heedfulness and fear. 2. To know the special duties and advantages of your own age, and turn your thoughts wholly unto those. Scripture hath various precepts for the various ages: study your own part. The young have more time to learn their duty, and less care and business to divert them; let them therefore be taken up in obedient learning. The middle age hath most vigour of body and mind, and therefore should do their master's work, with the greatest vigour, activity, and zeal. The aged should have most judgment, and experience, and acquaintedness with death and heaven; and therefore should teach the younger both by word and holy life.

Tempt. 11. 'The tempter also fitteth his temptations, to men's several bodily tempers. The hot and strong he tempteth to lust. The sad and fearful to discouragement and continual self-vexations; and to the fear of men and devils. Those that have strong appetites, to gluttony and drunkenness. Children, and women, and weak-headed people, to pride of apparel, and trifling compliment. And masculine, wicked unbelievers, to pride of honour, parts, and grandeur, and to an ambitious seeking of rule and greatness. The meek and gentle he tempteth to a yieldingness unto the persuasions and will of erroneous and tempting persons: and those that are more stiff, to a stubborn resistance of all that should do them good. He found it most suitable to tempt a Saul to malice; David, by a surprise, to lust; Absalom to ambition; Peter to fearfulness, and after to compliance and dissimulation, to avoid the offence and displeasure of the weak; Luther to rashness; Melancthon to fearfulness; Carolostadius to unsettledness; Illiricus to inordinate zeal; Osiander to self-esteem; (if historians have given them their due.) One shoe fitteth not every foot.'

Direct. 11. Let your strictest watch be upon the sins of your temperature; far greater diligence and resolution are here necessary than against other sins. And withdraw the fuel, and strive against the bodily distempers themselves. Fasting and labour will do much against lust, which idle-

ness and fulness continually feed ; and so the rest have their several cures. Know also what good your temper doth give you special advantage for ; and let it be turned unto that, and still employed in it.

Tempt. iii. ' The tempter suiteth his temptations to your estates, of poverty or riches ; the poor he tempteth to murmur and be impatient under their wants, and distress themselves more with griefs and cares ; and to think that their sufferings may save them without holiness, and that necessary labour for their bodies may excuse them from much minding the concernments of their souls ; and either to censure and hate the rich through envy, or to flatter them for gain. The rich he tempteth to an idle, time-wasting, voluptuous, fleshly, brutish life ; to excess in sleep, and meat, and drink, and sport, and apparel, and costly ways of pride, and idle discourse, and visits, and compliments ; to love the wealth and honours of the world, and live in continual pleasing of the flesh ; to fare deliciously every day, and to waste their time in unprofitableness without a constant calling ; and to be unmerciful to the poor, and to tyrannize over their inferiors^a.'

Direct. iii. Here also observe regardfully where your danger lieth, and there keep a continual watch. Let the poor remember, that if they be not rich in grace, it is long of themselves ; and if they be they have the chiefest riches, and have learnt in all estates to be content ; and have great cause to be thankful to God, that thus helpeth them against the love and pleasures of the world. Let the rich remember, that they have not less to do than the poor, because they have more committed to their trust ; nor may they ever the more satisfy the inordinate desires of the flesh : but they have more to do, and more dangers to fear and watch against, as they have more of their Master's talents to employ, and give account for at the last.

Tempt. iv. ' The devil suiteth his temptations to men's daily work and business. If it be low, to be ashamed of it through pride ; if it be high, to be proud of it ; if it be hard, to be weary and unfaithful in it, or to make it take up all their minds and time ; if it be about worldly things, he tempteth them to be tainted by it with a worldly mind : if

they labour for themselves, he tempteth them to overdo ; if for others, he tempteth them to deceitful, unfaithful negligence and sloth. If they are ministers, he tempteth them to be idle, and unfaithful, and senseless of the weight of truth, the worth of souls, the brevity of time, that so their sin may be the ruin or the loss of many. If rulers, the devil useth his utmost skill to cause them to espouse an interest contrary to the interest of truth and holiness ; and to cast some quarrel against Christ into their minds, and to persuade them that his interest is against their's, and that his servants are their enemies.'

Direct. iv. See that your work be lawful, and that God have called you to it, and then take it as the service which he himself assigneth you, and do it as in his sight, and as passing to his judgment, in obedience to his will : and mind not so much whether it be hard or easy, low or high, as whether you are faithful in it. And if it be sanctified to you, by your intending all to the pleasing of God, remember that he loveth and rewardeth that servant that stoopeth to the lowest work at his command, as much as he that is employed in the highest : do all for God, and walk in holiness with him, and keep out selfishness (the poison of your callings), and observe the proper danger of your places, and keep a constant watch against them.

Tempt. v. 'The devil suiteth his temptations to our several relations. Parents he tempteth to be cold and regardless of the great work of a wise and holy education of their children. Children he tempteth to be disobedient, unthankful, void of natural affection, irreverent dishonourers of their parents. Husbands he tempteth to be unloving, unkind, impatient with the weaknesses of their wives ; and wives to be peevish, self-willed, proud, clamorous, passionate, and disobedient. Masters he tempteth to use their servants only as their beasts, for their own commodity, without any care of their salvation and God's service ; and servants he tempteth to be carnal, untrusty, false, slothful, eye-servants, that take more care to hide a fault than not to commit it. Ministers and magistrates he tempteth to seek themselves, and neglect their charge, and set up their own ends instead of the common good ; or to mistake the common good, or the means that tend to it. Subjects and people he tempteth to dishonour and murmur against their gover-

nors, and to censure them unjustly, and to disobey them, and rebel; or else to honour, and fear, and serve them more than God, and against God.'

Direct. v. Here learn well the duties and dangers of your own relations, and remember that it is much of your work to be faithful and excellent in your relations. And mind not so much what other men owe to you, as what you owe to God and them. Let masters, and ministers, and magistrates first study and carefully practise their own duties, and yet they must next see that their inferiors do their duties, because that is their office: but they must be more desirous that God be first served, and more careful to procure obedience to him, than that they be honoured or obeyed themselves. Children, servants, and subjects must be taken up in the well-doing of their proper work; remembering that their good or hurt lieth far more upon that, than upon their superior's dealings with them, or usage of them. As it is your own body, and not your superiors', which your soul doth animate, nourish, and use, and which you have the continual sense and charge of; so it is your own duty, and not your superiors', which you have to do and to answer for, and therefore most to mind and talk of.

Tempt. vi. 'The tempter also suiteth his temptations to our advantages, and hopes of rising or thriving in the world: he seeth which is our rising or thriving way; and there he layeth his snares, accommodated to our designs and ends, making some sinful omission or commission seem necessary thereto. Either Balaam must prophesy against the people of God, or else God must keep him from honour, by keeping him from sin. If once Judas be set on, 'What will you give me?' The devil will teach him the way to gain: his way is necessary to such sinful ends.'

Direct. vi. Take heed therefore of overvaluing the world, and being taken with its honour, pleasure, or prosperity: take heed, lest the love of earthly things engage you in eager desires and designs to grow great or rich. For if once your heart have such a design, you are gone from God: the heart is gone, and then all will follow as occasion calls for it. Understand these Scriptures, "Labour not to be rich.—He that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent.—He that hasteth to be rich hath an evil eye.—But they that will

into temptations and a snare, and into many and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition : for the love of money is the root of all evil ; but godliness with contentment is great gain.—Seek not great matters for yourselves^r.” Be dead to the world : fear more the rising than the falling way. Love that condition best, which fitteth thee for communion with God, or maketh thee the most profitable servant to him ; and hate that most, which is the greatest hinderance from these, and would most enslave thee to the world.

Tempt. vii. ‘The tempter suiteth his temptations to our company : if they have any error or sin, or are engaged in any carnal enterprise, he will make them snares to us, and restless until they have ensnared us : if they love us not he will make them continual provocations, and set before us all their wrongs, and provoke us to uncharitableness and revenge. If they love us he will endeavour to make their love to us to be the shoeing-horn or harbinger of their errors and evil ways, to draw us to their imitation. He findeth something in all our company, to make the matter of some temptation.’

Direct. vii. Converse most with God : let faith make Christ and angels your most regarded and observed company ; let their mind and presence may more affect you than the mind and presence of mortal men. Look not at any man’s mind, or will, or actions, without respect to God who governeth, and to the rule by which they should all be suited, and to the judgment which will open and reward them as they are. Never see man without seeing God : see man only as a creature dependant on his Maker’s will. And then you will lament and not imitate him when he sinneth ; and you will oppose (and Christ saith “hate^s,”) and not be seduced by him, when he would draw you with him to sin and all : had Adam more observed God than Eve he had not been seduced by his helper. Then you will look on the proud, and worldly, and sensual, as Solomon on the slothful man’s vineyard, “I saw and considered it well, I looked on it, and received instruction^t.” You would not long for the plague or leprosy, because it is your friend’s disease.

Tempt. viii. ‘The tempter maketh advantage of other

^r Prov. xxiii. 4. xxviii. 20—22. Phil. vi. 9. Jer. xlv. 5.

^s Luke xiv. 26.

^t Prov. xxiv. 30—32.

men's opinions or speeches of you, or dealings by you; and by every one of them would ensnare you in some sin: if they have mean thoughts of you, or speak despising or dishonouring words of you, he tempteth you by it to hate them, or love them less, or to speak contemptuously of them. If they applaud you, he tempteth you by it to be proud; if they wrong you, he tempteth you to revenge; if they enrich you, or are your benefactors, he would make their benefits a price to hire you to some sin, and make you pay as dear for them as your salvation cometh to. If they scorn you for religion, he would make you ashamed of Christ and his cause; if they admire you, he would draw you by it to hypocrisy. If they threaten you, he would draw you to sin by fear, as he did Peter; if they deal rudely with you, he tempteth you to passion, and to requite them with the like, and even to distaste religion itself, if men professing religion be against you, or seem to do you any wrong. Thus is every man a danger to his brother.'

Direct. VIII. Discern in all men what there is of God to be your help, and that make use of; and what there is of satan, sin, and self, and that take heed of. Look upon every man as a helper and a tempter; and be prepared still, to draw forth his help, and resist his temptation. And remember, that man is but the instrument; it is satan that tempteth you, and God that trieth you by that man! Saith David of Shimei, "The Lord hath bidden him:" that is, he is but God's rod to scourge me for my sin, as my son himself is. As satan was his instrument in trying Job, not by God's effecting, but permitting the sin: observe God and satan in it, more than men.

Tempt. IX. 'His temptations also are suited to our fore-received opinions and thoughts. If you have but let in one lustful thought, or one malicious thought, he can make great advantage of that nest-egg to gather in more, as a little leaven to leaven the whole lump: he can roll it up and down, and do much to hatch it into a multitude. If you are but tainted with any false opinion, or prejudice against your teacher, your ruler, or your brother, he can improve it to such increase, and raise such conclusions from it, and more from them, and reduce them all to practice, as shall make observers with astonishment say, Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth.'

Direct. ix. Take heed what thoughts you first admit into your mind: and especially cherish and approve none, but upon very good trial and examination. And, if they prove corrupt, sweep clean your fantasy and memory of them, that they prove not inhabitants, and take not up their lodgings in you, or have not time to spawn and breed. And fill up the room with contrary thoughts, and useful truth, and cherish them daily that they may increase and multiply: and then your hearts will be like a well peopled kingdom, able to keep their possession against all enemies.

Tempt. x. 'Also he fitteth his temptations to your natural and acquired parts: that if you are weak, he may either discourage you, or, which is more usual and dangerous, make you think better of them than they are, and to think you know much, when it is next to nothing; and to make you wise in your own eyes, and easily to receive an error, and then to be confident in it: not to discern between things that differ; but to be deceived into false zeal, and false ways, by the specious pretences and shews of truth; and then to be zealous for the deceiving of others. Also that you may be a dishonour to truth and godliness, by your weakness and ill management of good causes; and may give them away through your unskilfulness to the adversary. If you are of stronger wits and parts, the tempter will draw you to despise the weak; to take common gifts for special grace, or to undervalue holiness and humility, and overvalue learning and acuteness. He will tempt you, dangerously, to loathe the simplicity of Christianity and of the Scriptures, as to style and method, and to be offended at the cross of Christ. So that such persons are usually in greater danger of infidelity, heresy, pride, and insolent domineering over the flock of Christ, than vulgar Christians that have lower parts.'

Direct. x. Labour to be well acquainted with yourselves. If you are weak, know your weakness, that you may be humble, and fearful, and seek for strength and help. If you are comparatively strong, remember how weak the strongest are; and how little it is that the wisest know! And study well the ends and use of knowledge; and that all that you know may be concocted into love and holiness; and use it as remembering that you have much to give account of.

Tempt. XI. 'Moreover the tempter will fetch advantage against you from your former life and actions. If you have gone out of the way to heaven, he would harden you by custom, and make you think it such a disgrace or trouble to return, as that it is as good go on, and put it to the venture: If you have done any work materially good, while your heart and course of life are carnal and worldly, he would quiet you in your sinful, miserable state, by applauding the little good that you have done. If a good man have erred or done ill, he will engage his honour in it, and make him study to defend it, or excuse it, lest it prove his shame: and tempt men, as he did David, to hide one sin with another: If he get hold of one link, he will draw on all the chain of sin.'

Direct. XI. Take heed, therefore, what you do; and foresee the end. Let not the devil get in one foot: try your way, before you enter it. But if you have erred, come off, and that thoroughly and betime, whatever it cost, for be sure it will cost more to go on. And if he would make a snare of the good that you have done, remember that this is to turn it into the greatest evil: and that there must be a concurrence and integrity of good, to make you acceptable, and to save you. Heart and life must be good to the end.

Tempt. XII. 'Lastly, He fitteth his temptations to the season. He will take the season just when an evil thought is most likely to take with you; and when the winds and tide do serve him: that will take at one time, (when a man hath his wits and heart to seek) which would be abhorred at another. In afflicting times, he will draw you to deny Christ with Peter, or shift for yourselves by sinful means. In prosperous times, he will tempt you to security, worldliness, and forgetfulness of the night and winter which approacheth. The timing his temptations is his great advantage.

Direct. XII. Dwell as with God, and you dwell as in eternity, and will see still that as time, so all the pleasure, and advantages, and dangers, and sufferings of time, are things, of themselves, of little moment. Keep your eye upon judgment and eternity, where all the errors of time will be rectified, and all inequalities of time will be levelled, and the sorrows and joys that are transitory, will be no

more: and then, no reasons from the frowns or flatteries of the times will seem of any force to you. And be still employed for God, and still armed and on your watch, that satan may never find you disposed to take the bait.

The Tempter's Method in Applying his Prepared Baits.

Tempt. 1. 'The devil's first work is, to present the tempting bait, in all its alluring, deceiving properties: to make it seem as true as may be to the understanding: and as good and amiable as may be to the will. To say as much as can be said for an evil cause; he maketh his image of truth and goodness as beautiful as he can: sin shall be sugared, and its pleasure shall be its strength^u: sin shall have its wages paid down in hand^x: he will set it out with full mouthed praises. 'O what a fine thing it is to be rich, and please the flesh continually! to have command, and honour, and lusts, and sports, and what you desire! Who would refuse such a condition that may have it?' "All this will I give thee," was the temptation which he thought fit to assault Christ himself with. And he will corrupt the history of time past, and tell you that it went well with those that took his way^y. And for the future, he will promise them, that they shall be gainers by it, (as he did Eve) and shall have peace, though they please their flesh in sinning^z.

Direct. 1. In this case, first, inquire what God saith of that which satan so commendeth. The commendations and motions of an enemy are to be suspected: God is most to be believed: 2. Then consider, not only whether it be good, but how long it will be good; and what it will prove at the end; and how we shall judge of it at the parting. And withal, consider, what it tendeth to; whether it tend to good or evil: and, whether it be the greatest good that we are capable of. And then you will see, that if there were no good, or appearance of good in it, it could do a voluntary agent no hurt, and were not fit to be the matter of a temptation. And you will see that it is temporal good set up to deceive you of the eternal good, and to entice you into the greatest evil and misery. Doth the devil shew thee the world, and say, "All this will I give thee?" Look to

^u Heb. xi. 25.

^x 2 Pet. ii. 15.

^y Jer. xliv. 17.

^z Deut. xxix. 19.

Christ who sheweth thee the glory of the world to come, with all things good for thee in this world, and saith more truly, "All this will I give thee." The world and hell are in one end of the balance, and pardon, holiness, and heaven are in the other. Which now wilt thou prefer? If the devil have more to give thee and bid for thee than Christ, let him take thee.

Tempt. II. 'The tempter laboureth to keep God, and Christ, and heaven out of sight, that they darken not the splendour of his bait, and to hide those potent reasons from them, by which they might easily repel the temptation: so that though they are well known and sure, and Scripture be full of them, they shall none of them be ready at hand to use, when the temptation cometh; so that to them they shall be all as nothing: and this he doth by unbelief and inconsiderateness.'

Direct. II. Live by faith. See that God the Father, the Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit dwell within you, and take up your hearts, and your hopes be placed all on heaven, and that these be your very life and business; and then you will always have that at hand, which may repel the tempter. A heart taken up with God and Christ, conversing in heaven, is always fortified, and prepared to meet every temptation with abhorrence. Let your souls be still possessed with as constant apprehensions of the evil of sin, the danger of sinning, the presence, authority, and holiness of God, the wrong that sin doth him, the hurt it doth ourselves and others, and what it did to Jesus Christ, as you have of the danger of fire, and water, and poison; and then the tempter will not speed.

Tempt. III. 'It is the great care of the devil to keep out of sight, that he be not seen himself in the temptation. As the angler keepeth himself behind the bush, and the fowler hideth himself from the birds, or else they would fear, and fly, and escape; so doth the devil use all his art, to hide himself from the sinner's observation; that the deluded soul shall little think that the devil is so near him, and hath so great a hand in the business. If the ambitious or covetous worldling saw the devil offer him the bait, and heard him say, "All this will I give thee;" he would have the smaller list to take the bait. If the devil appeared to the whore-

monger, and brought him his whore, and encouraged him to his filthiness, it would cool his lust: or if he appeared to the drunkard, and presented him the cup, he would have but little list to drink: if the proud and the malicious saw the devil at their backs, rejoicing in their sin, and putting them on, it might affright them half into their wits. Therefore the great endeavour of the devil is, to persuade men that it is not he that makes the motion to them: it is such a friend, or such a neighbour, or gentleman, or minister, or wise man; it is not the devil! till the fish is caught, and the bird is in the net; and then the author of all appeareth to kill them, and carry them away, without any concealment.'

∴ *Direct.* III. Mark but the tendency and the manner of the temptations, and you may perceive the author. Who else is it that is so much against God, and against your everlasting happiness? Who else is it that would so abuse your reason, to prefer things temporal, before things eternal, and the brutish pleasures of a corruptible flesh, before the interest of immortal souls? Who else so contradicteth all the Word of God? Read God's warnings, and he will tell you who it is. Take every temptation then, whoever be the messenger, as if thou sawest the devil standing by, and making the motion to thee, and heardest himself exhort thee to sin. Suppose you saw him conducting you to the whore-house, the play-house, the ale-house, and making you entertainment as the master of the game? How then would you take it? And what would you do? Would you go and be angry at the precise preacher that would hinder you? And would you take the devil's part? No, nature hath possessed you with a fear of him, and an enmity to him: use it for your safety. It cannot be good for you that comes from him! He hath a fouler face to appear to you in than ever yet you saw, when you have done his work and are where he would have you. O know with whom you have to do!

Tempt. IV. 'The tempter is most careful also to hide from men the nature and tendency of the temptation itself; that they shall not know that it is a temptation when they are tempted, but shall have nothing in sight but the bait which they desire. The angler doth not only hide himself from the fish, but also his rod, and line, and hook as much as he can: the fowler covereth his nets: so that either the

fish and bird shall not see the snare, or shall not know what it is, and what it is there laid for. So when the bait of pleasure, and honour, and wealth is presented by the devil, to the fornicator, gamester, proud, or covetous, they shall not see what the devil is doing now, and what a game he is playing for their souls ! They shall not perceive the connection that there is between the pleasure and the sin, and the sin and the threatening, and the threatening and the judgment, and the judgment and the everlasting punishment. When Judas was bargaining with the Pharisees, he knew not that the devil was in him, driving on the match.

Direct. iv. Be wise and suspicious : blindness or foolhardiness will lead you into the snare. Be wise that you may know the tendency of every thing that is presented to your thoughts, and may be able to perceive a danger. Be suspicious and cautelous, that you make a sufficient trial, and go upon sure grounds, and avoid the very appearance of evil : when it is hell that you fear, come not too near. Play not as the fly about the candle ; salvation is necessary ; but preferment, or wealth, or liberty, or credit, or life itself are not necessary to you ! Prove all things : flatter not yourselves into the snares by foolish hopes, [and judging of things as the flesh would have them to be, rather than as they are. If no danger appear, turn up all coverings, and search and see that none be hidden. The devil hath his gunpowder-plots, and mines which may blow you up before you are aware. Not only lawfulness and indifferency, but great good is the pretence for greatest evil.

Tempt. v. ' It is the tempter's care to bring the tempting object near enough, or draw the sinner near enough to it : the net must come to the fish, or the fish to the net : the distant fire will not burn the wood. The devil's chief confidence is in the sensitive appetite, which worketh strongest at hand. If he get the drunkard into the alehouse and shew him the cup, he hath half conquered him already : but if he be scrupulous and modest, some one shall drink a health, or importune him, and put the cup into his hand. The thief with Achan shall see the bait, and the sight will work a covetous desire. The glutton shall have the tempting dishes before him, and be at a table which by variety of delicious food, is fitted to become his snare ; whereas if he had nothing

set before him, but the poor man's simple food which hath nothing in it fit to tempt him, he might easily have escaped. The fornicator shall have his beautiful dirt brought near him, and presented to him in a tempting dress ; for at a sufficient distance there had been little danger. The ambitious person shall have preferment offered him, or brought so fair to his hand that with a little seeking it may be attained. The fearful coward shall be threatened with the loss of estate or life, and hear the report of the canons, guns and drums of satan. Peter is half conquered when he is got among questioning company in the high-priest's hall. Thus David, thus Lot, thus ordinarily sinners are drawn into the snare.'

Direct. v. As ever you would preserve your innocency and your souls, fly as far from tempting objects as you can : I say as you can, without distrusting God in the neglect of a certain duty. A wife, or a servant that are bound cannot fly : nor must we leave undone our certain duty upon an uncertain danger, which may otherwise be avoided : but keep off from the temptation at as great a distance as you can : the safest course is the best when your souls lie at the stake : if it be not necessary, plead not the lawfulness of what you do, when it is a temptation to that which is unlawful. You say, it is lawful to wear such curious ornaments, and set out yourselves in the neatest dress ; but is it lawful to be proud or lustful, or to consume your time unprofitably ? If not, tempt not yourselves or others to it. Keep away from the place where the snare is laid. Look first to the end before you meddle with the beginning. Why should I eat that which I know I cannot digest, but must cast it up again ? And why should I taste that which I must not eat ? And why should I desire to have that set before me, and to look upon that which I must not taste ? Come not near if thou wouldst not be taken. What dost thou at the alehouse with a cup before thee, if thou wouldst not be drawn to excess of drink ? If thou be subject to excess in eating, make not thy own table thy temptation. Fly from the temptation as thou wouldst do from hell, or from the devil himself. See not the bait of lust, or come not near, if thou be inclinable to lust, saith Solomon, " Remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her house ; for her end

is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword : her feet go down to death, her steps take hold on hell. Her house inclineth to death and her paths unto the dead : none that go to her return again, neither take they hold of the paths of life. Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death. Whoso is simple let him turn in hither : and as for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him, Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant. But he knoweth not that the dead are there ; and that her guests are in the depths of hell. Lust not after her beauty in thy heart, neither let her take thee with her eyelids. Can a man take fire in his bosom and his clothes not be burnt*? Remember that you pray daily, "Lead us not into temptation:" and if you will run into it yourselves, are not your prayers hypocritical and an abuse of God? If you would be saved from sin, you must be saved in God's way : and that is by flying from temptations ; and not drawing near, and gazing on forbidden objects, and tempting yourselves : even as God's holy means must be used by all that would come to holiness and heaven ; so the devil's must be avoided by him that would escape sin and hell. 2. But if you cannot remove far enough from the snare, then double your fear, and watchfulness, and resolution : fly with Joseph from the sin, if you cannot go out of the house. How carefully should every foot be placed, when we know that every step we tread is among snares ! Rule your senses, if you cannot remove the bait : make Job's covenant with your eyes, that you look not on that which would allure ! Let every sense have a constant watch.

Tempt. vi. The next great work of the tempter is, to give us the fairest opportunities to sin, and to remove all impediments, and shew men encouraging hopes and invitations. He will shew the thief which way he may steal ; and shew the covetous man which way he may thrive, and deceive, and over-reach ; and the ambitious man which way he may rise ; and the fornicator how he may obtain his desire, and sin unknown : and then he tells them how easy it is ; now no one seeth you ; you may do it without fear or shame. It is the devil's great care to take all things out of the way that would affright, or hinder sinners ; that they may have

* Prov. v. 8. iv. 5. ii. 18, 19. vii. 27. ix. 16, 18. vi. 25, 27, 28.

all opportunity to invite them. Therefore he is very desirous that public impediments should be all removed; especially in a godly magistrate and minister, and that the common disgrace of sinning may be taken off, and, if it may be, turned against religion, or fall on them that are the greatest adversaries to sin.'

Direct. vi. It is therefore a principal part of your wisdom and watchfulness, to avoid the opportunities of sinning, and keep out as many impediments as may be in your own way. It is a most foolish and sinful thing in some men, who think it a brave thing to have power to do hurt, though they pretend they abhor the doing of it: he that saith he hateth oppression, yet would have a power to oppress; to have all men at his will and mercy he thinks is brave: so they that would not be gluttonous would have a tempting table still before them, presuming that their own will is a sufficient preservative against the sin: so they that would not be ensnared with lust, have yet a desire to appear as comely, and lovely, and desirable as may be, and to be as much beloved, that they may have other affections at command; and also to have opportunity offered them, that they may sin if they will. And is thy will so well established, mortified and unchangeable, as to be so far trusted? O foolish sinner that no better knowest thyself, nor observest thy danger? Nor perceivest that this very desire to have the power to do evil sheweth a degree of the evil in thy heart, and that thou art not yet so far from it as thou must be, if thou wouldst be safe. Contrive thyself (if thou be wise and love thyself) into the greatest difficulty of sinning that thou canst. Make it impossible, if it may be done. The power is for the act. Desire not to be able to sin, if thou wouldst not sin; not that natural power to do good should be destroyed because it is also a power to do evil, but cast as many blocks in the way of thy sinning as thou canst, till it amount to a moral impossibility. Desire the strictest laws and governors, and to be still in the eye of others, and contrive it that thou mayst have no hope of secrecy. Contrive it so that it may be utter shame and loss to thee if thou sin. If thou be tempted to fornication, never be private with her or him that is thy snare. If thou be tempted to deceive and rob those that trust thee, avoid

the trust, or if ever thou have done it, restore and confess that shame may preserve thee.

Tempt. vii. 'Next the tempter importunately soliciteth our thoughts or fantasies, to feed upon the tempting thing: that the lustful person may be thinking on the objects of his lusts; and the ambitious man thinking on his desired honour; and the covetous man of his desired wealth, his house, or lands, or gainful bargains; and the malicious man be thinking of all the real or imaginary wrongs, which kindle malice.'

Direct. vii. Keep a continual watch upon your thoughts. Remember that this is the common entrance of the greatest sins: and if they go no further, the Searcher of hearts will judge thee for the adultery, murder, and other sins of thy heart. But especially see that your thoughts be so employed on better things, that sin may never find them vacant.

Tempt. viii. 'The tempter also is diligent to keep the end from the sinner's eye, and to persuade him, that there is no danger in it, and that it will be as good at last as at first. He cannot endure a thought, a word of death or judgment, unless he can first fortify the sinner, by some presumptuous hope, that his sins are pardoned, and his case is good: either he will make him believe him, that there is no such danger to the soul as should deter him; or else he keepeth him from thinking of that danger. He is loath a sinner should so much as look into a grave, or go to the house of mourning, and see the end of all the living; lest he should lay it to heart, and thence perceive what worldly pleasure, wealth, and greatness are, by seeing where they leave sinners. If one do but talk of death, or judgment, and the life to come, the devil will stir up some scorn, or weariness, or opposition against such discourse. If a sinner do but bethink himself in secret, what will become of him after death, the devil will either allure him, or trouble him, and never let him rest, till he have cast away all such thoughts as tend to his salvation. He cannot endure, when you see the pomp and pleasure of the world, that you should think or ask, How long will this endure? And what will it prove in the latter end?'

Direct. viii. Go to the Holy Scriptures, and see what

they foretel concerning the end of godliness and sin: God knoweth better than the devil, and is more to be believed. You may see in the Word of God, what will become of saints and sinners, godly and ungodly, at the last, and what they will think and say, when they review their present life; and what Christ will say to them, and how he will judge them, and what will be their reward for ever. This is the infallible prognostication, where you may foresee your endless state. In this glass continually foresee the end. Never judge of any thing by the present gust alone. Ask not only how it tasteth, but how it worketh, and what will be the effects: remember that God's law hath inseparably conjoined holiness and heaven; and sin unrepented of, and hell; and seeing these cannot be separated indeed, let them never be separated from each other in your thoughts. Otherwise you will never understand Christ or Satan. When Christ saith, "Wilt thou deny thyself, and take up the cross, and follow me;" his meaning is, shall I heal thy carnal, worldly heart and life, and bring thee by grace to the sight of God in endless glory? You will never understand what prayer, and obedience, and holy living mean, if you see not the end, even heaven, conjoined to them. When the devil saith to the glutton, 'eat also of this pleasant dish;' and to the drunkard, 'take the other cup;' and to the fornicator, 'take thy pleasure in the dark;' and to the voluptuous, 'go to the play-house, or the gaming-house; come, play at cards or dice;' his meaning is, 'Come, venture upon sin, and fear not God's threatenings, and refuse his word, and Spirit, and grace, that I may have thy company among the damned, in the fire which never shall be quenched.' This is the true English of every temptation. Open thy ears then, and whenever the devil, or any sinner, tempteth thee to sin, hear him as if he said, 'I pray thee leap into the flames of hell.'

Tempt. ix. 'If the tempter cannot quickly draw men to the sin, he will move them at least to abate their resolution against it, and to deliberate about it, and hear what can be said, and enter into a dispute with satan, or some of his instruments; telling them, that it is a sign of falsehood which will not endure the trial, and that we must prove all things. And while the sinner is deliberating and disputing, the ve-

nom is working itself into his veins, and sense is secretly undermining and betraying him, and deceiving his mind, bribing his reason, and seducing his will: just as an enemy will treat with those that keep a garrison, that, during the treaty, he may send in spies, and find out their weakness, and corrupt the soldiers: so doth the devil with the sinner.

Direct. ix. Remember that it is Christ, and not satan, that you are to hear. Truth is strong, and can bear the trial, before any competent judge; but you are weak, and not so able to judge as you may imagine. Ignorant, unskilful, and unsettled persons are easily deceived, be the cause never so clear. If it be a cause untried by you, it is not untried by all the godly, nor unknown to him that gave you the Holy Scriptures. If it be fit to be called in question and disputed, take the help of able, godly teachers or friends, and hear what they can say: matters of endless life or death, are not rashly to be ventured on. But if it be a thing past dispute, in which you have been already convinced and resolved, reject the tempter, and tell him, that you owe him not so much service, as to dispute with him, whether you should care for your salvation? Else there will be no end, till you are betrayed and undone: innocent Eve is deceived, when once it comes to a dispute. Be not like Balaam, that tempted God, and would not be satisfied with his answer.

Tempt. x. 'Also the tempter overcometh very many, by making them presumptuously confident of their own strength: saying, Thou art not so weak as not to be able to bear a greater temptation than this. Canst thou not gaze on beauty, or go among vain and tempting company, and yet choose whether thou wilt sin? It is a child indeed that hath no more government of themselves. Cannot thy table, thy cup, thy house, thy lands, be pleasing and delectable, but thou must needs over-love them, and turn them to sin?

Direct. x. O know thy own weakness! The treacherous enemy which thou still carriest about thee, who is ready to open the back-door to the devil, Remember that flesh is on the tempter's side; and how much it can do with thee before thou art aware. Remember what an unsettled wretch thou art: and how many a good purpose formerly hath come to nothing; and how oft thou hast sinned by as small

a temptation. Remember that without the Spirit of Christ, thou canst do nothing, nor stand against any assault of *satan*; and that Christ giveth his Spirit and help in his own way, and not to those that tempt him to forsake them, by thrusting themselves into temptations. Shall ever mortal man presume upon his own strength, after the falls of an Adam, a Noah, a Lot, a David, a Solomon, a Hezekiah, a Josiah, a Peter? and after such ruins of multitudes of professors, as our eyes have seen? "All these things happened unto them for ensamples, and they are written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall^b."

Tempt. xi. 'It is a great project of the devil, and successful with many, to draw them to venture on the sin, by shewing them first the effectual remedy, the abundant mercy of God, the sufficient satisfaction made by Christ, the full, and free, and universal promise; that these are sufficient to cleanse the soul of any sin: therefore you need not fear.'

Direct. xi. But God is just, as well as merciful; and there are "vessels of wrath," as well as vessels of mercy. Judge how God will use his mercy, and who shall have it, by his own word: for he knoweth better than you, to whom, and how far to shew mercy. Is the tempter himself saved, for all God is merciful? And the Gospel hath far sorer punishment than the law, to the abusers of grace. Christ is the most dreadful Judge to the wicked, as well as the tenderest Saviour to his own. There is enough in his grace to save the penitent: but if you will sin upon presumption that grace will save you, you have small reason to think that you are penitent, or ever will be, without a very merciful change. How many can you name that ever were converted and forgiven, that lived wilfully in sin, because the remedy was sufficient? I doubt not but many such have been recalled; but this is not the way to hope: it is a terrible thing to sin deliberately and wilfully, because of the greatness of mercy, or the sufficiency of the death of Christ! No man but the penitent convert is saved by Christ; and this is clean contrary to penitence and conversion. Christ doth not as

^b 1 Cor. x. 11, 12.

mountebanks, that wound a man, to shew people how quickly their balsams can cure him; or make a man drink a toad; to shew the power of their antidotes: but he cureth the diseases which he findeth (in believers), but causeth none.

Tempt. xii. 'Also the tempter telleth the sinner, how certain, and easy, and speedy a remedy he hath in his own power: it is but repenting, and all sin is pardoned.'

Direct. xii. 1. Is it in thy power? If so, the greater is thy sin, that sinnest more when thou shouldst repent: if it be easy, what an inexcusable wretch art thou that wilt not do it, but go on? 2. But repentance is the gift of God; and is he like to give it to them that wilfully abuse him in expectation of it? 3. As easy as it is, it is but a few that truly repent and are forgiven, in comparison of those that go on and perish. 4. The easiest repentance is so bitter, that it is far easier to forbear the sin: it is better not wound yourselves, than have the best salve, if you were sure of it. 5. The repentance which is caused by mere fears of death and hell, without the power of heavenly love to God and holiness, is but the repentance of the damned, and never procureth pardon of sin: the devil hath such a repentance, as well as such a faith, which will not save him.

Tempt. xiii. 'Satan also emboldeneth the sinner, by telling him how many have repented and sped well, that sinned as bad, or worse than this: he tells him of Noah, and Lot, and David, and Peter, and the thief on the cross, and Paul, a persecutor, yea, and Manasseh, &c.'

Direct. xiii. But consider whether any of those did thus sin, because that others had escaped that sinned before them. And think of the millions that never repented and are condemned, as well as those few that have repented. Is repentance better than sin? why then will you sin? Is sin better than repentance? why then do you purpose to repent? Is it not base ingratitude to offend God wilfully, because he hath pardoned many offenders, and is ready to forgive the penitent? And should a man of reason wilfully make work for his own repentance; and do that which he knoweth he shall wish with grief that he had never done? If some have been saved that fell into the sea, or that fell from the top of steeples, or that drunk poison, or were dangerously

wounded, will you therefore cast yourself into the same case, in hope of being saved?

Tempt. xiv. ‘The tempter persuadeth the sinner, that it cannot be that God should make so great a matter of sin; because the thoughts of a man’s heart, or his words, or deeds are matter of no great moment, when man himself is so poor a worm: and whatever he doth, it is no hurt to God. Therefore you need not make such a matter of it.’

Direct. xiv. If God so much regard us as to make us, and preserve us continually, and to become our Governor, and make a law for us and judge us, and reward his servants with no less than heaven; then you may easily see that he so much regardeth us, as to observe whether we obey or break his laws. He that so far careth for a clock or watch, as to make it and wind it up, doth care whether it go true or false. What do these men make of God, who think he cares not what men do? Then he cares not if men beat you, or rob you, or kill you, for none of this hurteth God? And the king may say, if any murder your friends or children, why should I punish him? he hurt not me. But justice is to keep order in the world, and not only to preserve the governor from hurt: God may be wronged, though he be not hurt. And he will make you pay for it, if you hurt others; and smart for it, if you hurt yourself.

Tempt. xv. ‘The tempter laboureth to extenuate the sin, and make it seem a little one; and if every little sin must be made such a matter of, you will never be quiet.’

Direct. xv. But still remember, 1. There is deadly poison in the very nature of sin, as there is in a serpent be he never so small: the least sin is worse than the greatest pain that ever man felt; and would you choose that, and say, it is little? The least sin is odious to God, and had a hand in the death of Christ, and will damn you if it be not pardoned: and should such a thing be made light of? And many sins counted small may have great aggravations, such as the knowing, deliberate, wilful committing of them are. To love a small sin is a great sin; especially to love it so well, that the remembrance of God’s will and love, of Christ, and heaven, and hell, will not suffice to resolve you against it. Besides, a small sin is the common way to greater: “When lust hath conceived it brings forth sin, and sin

when it is finished brings forth death^d.” “ Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth^e.” The horrid sins of David and Peter had small beginnings. Mortal sicknesses seem little matters at the first. Many thousands have sinned themselves to hell, that began with that which is accounted small.

Tempt. xvi. ‘ Also the devil draweth on the sinner, by promising him that he shall sin but once, or but a very few times, and then do so no more : he tells the thief and the fornicator, that if they will do it but this once, they shall be quiet.’

Direct. xvi. But, O consider, 1. That one stab at the heart may prove incurable. God may deny thee time or grace to repent. 2. That it is easier to forbear the first time than the second ; for one sin disposeth the heart unto another ; if you cannot deny the first temptation, how will you deny the next ? When you have lost your strength, and grieved your helper, and strengthened your enemy and your snare, will you then resist better wounded, than now when you are whole ?

Tempt. xvii. ‘ But when the devil hath prevailed for once with the sinner, he makes that an argument for a second : he saith to the thief, and drunkard, and fornicator, it is but the same thing that thou hast done once already ; and if once may be pardoned, twice may be pardoned ; and if twice, why not thrice, and so on ?’

Direct. xvii. This it is to let the devil get in a foot : a spark is easier quenched than a flame ; but yet remember that the longer the worse : the oftener you sin, the greater is the abuse of the Spirit of God, and the contempt of grace, and the wrong to Christ, and the harder is repentance ; and the sharper if you do repent, because the deeper is your wound. Repent therefore speedily, and go no further, unless you would have the devil tell you next, it is now too late.

Tempt. xviii. ‘ The tempter maketh use of the greater sins of others, to persuade men to venture upon less. Thou hearest other men curse, and swear, and rail, and dost thou stick at idle talk ? How many in the world are enemies to Christ, and persecute his ministers and servants, and dost

^d James i. 14, 15.

^e James iii. 5.

thou make so great a matter of omitting a sermon, or a prayer, or other holy duty?

Direct. xviii. As there are degrees of sin, so there are degrees of punishment: and wilt thou rather choose the easiest place in hell than heaven? How small soever the matter of sin be, thy wilfulness and sinning against conscience, and mercies, and warnings, may make it great to thee. Are great sinners so happy in thy eyes, that thou wouldst be as like them as thou darest?

Tempt. xix. 'Also he would embolden the sinner, because of the commonness of the sin, and the multitude that commit either that or worse, as if it were not, therefore, so bad or dangerous.'

Direct. xix. But remember, that the more examples you have to take warning by, the more inexcusable is your fall. It was not the number of angels that fell, that could keep them from being devils and damned for their sin: God will do justice on many as well as on one. The sin is the greater, and therefore the punishment shall not be the less. Make the case your own: will you think it a good reason for any one to abuse you, beat you, rob you, because that many have done so before? He should rather think, that you are abused too much already, and therefore he should not add to your wrongs. If when many had spit in Christ's face or buffeted him, some one should have given him another spit or blow, as if he had not enough before, would you not have taken him to be the worst and cruellest of them all? If you do as the most, you will speed as the most.

Tempt. xx. 'It is a dangerous temptation when the devil proposeth some very good end, and maketh sin seem the fittest, or the necessary means to accomplish it: when he blindeth men so far as to think that it is necessary to their salvation, or to other men's, or to the welfare of the church, or progress of the Gospel, or the pleasing of God, then sin will be committed without regret, and continued in without repentance; on this account it is that heresy, and will-worship, and superstition are kept up: "Having a shew of wisdom in will-worship, and humility, and neglecting the body". It is for God that much of the wickedness of the

¹ Col. ii. 18. 21-23.

world is done against God : it is for the church and truth, that Papists have murdered and persecuted so many.'

Direct. xx. Remember that God needeth no sinful means to attain his ends : he will not be beholden to the devil to do his work ; he would not have forbid it, if he would have had you done it. He is never at such a loss, but he can find right means enough to perform his work by : it is a great part of our wisdom which our salvation lieth on to choose and use right means, when we are resolved on a right end. 'It is a horrible injury against God to entitle him to sin, and make it seem necessary to his ends and honour. Good ends will not justify evil actions. What sin so odious that hath not had good ends pretended for it? Even Christ was murdered as a malefactor for good ends, at least pretended, even to vindicate God's honour from blasphemy, and Cæsar from injury, and the nation from calamity. And his disciples were killed that God might be served by it, and pestilent troublers of the world taken away^s.

Tempt. xxi. 'He would make us presume because we are God's children, and special grace cannot be wholly lost, and we have found that once we had grace, therefore we may venture as being safe.'

Direct. xxi. But many thousands shall be damned, that once thought they had the truth of grace. It is a hard controversy among learned and godly men, whether some in a state of saving grace do not fall from it and perish ; but it is past controversy, that they shall perish that live and die impenitently in wilful sin. To plead truth of grace, for encouragement in sin, is so much against the nature and use of grace, as may make you question the truth of it. You can be no surer that you have true grace, than you are that you hate all known sin, and desire to be free from it. Christ teacheth you how to answer such a horrid temptation, "If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down : for it is written, he shall give his angels charge over thee." — "thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God^h." Sonship, and promises, and truth of grace, are incongruous arguments to draw you to sin, and heinous aggravations of sin so committed.

^s John xvi. 2. Acts xxiv. 5. xvii. 6.

^h Matt. iv. 6, 7.

Tempt. xxii. 'The devil oft most dangerously imitateth the Holy Ghost, and comes in the shape of an angel of light : he will be for knowledge in the Gnostics ; for unity and government in the Papists ; for mortification in the Friars ; for free-grace and tenderness of our brethren's consciences in the Libertines ; for peace and mutual forbearance in the Socinians ; for zeal, self-denial, and fearlessness of men, and pretended revelations and spirituality in the Quakers. He will be against heresy, schism, error, disobedience, hypocrisy, pretendedly, in haters and persecutors of holiness and reformation ; and when he will seem religious, he will be superstitious and seem to outgo Christ himself.

Direct. xxii. Keep close to Christ, that you may know his voice from the voice of strangers ; and get holy wisdom to try the spirits, and to discern between things that differ : let the whole frame of truth and godliness be in your head and heart, that you may perceive when any would make a breach in any part of it. The devil setteth up no good but in order to some evil. Therefore, examine whither it tendeth ; and not only what it is, but what use he would have you make of it. And love no evil, because of any good that is pretended for it ; and dislike or reject no good because of any evil use that is by others made of it. And whatever doctrine is brought you, try it thus :—1. Receive none that is against the certain nature, attributes, and honour of God. 2. Nor any that is against the light or law of nature. 3. Nor any that is against the Scripture. 4. Nor any that is against holiness of heart and life. 5. Nor any against charity and justice to men. 6. Nor any (about matters to be ordered by men) that is against order ; nor any against government and the peace of church and state. 7. Nor any that is against the true unity, peace, and communion of saints. 8. Nor any that is certainly inconsistent with great and certain truths. Thus try the spirits, whether they be of God.

Tempt. xxiii. 'The tempter usually draweth men to one extreme, under pretence of avoiding another ; causing men to be so fearful of the danger on one side, as to take no heed of that on the other side.'

Direct. xxiii. Understand all your danger ; and mark

the latitude or extent of God's commands ; and watch on every side : and you must know in what duties you are in danger of extremes and in what not. In those acts of the soul that are purely rational about your ultimate end, you cannot do too much : as in knowing God, and loving him, and being willing and resolved to please him. But passions may possibly go too far, even about God ; especially fear and grief, for they may be such as nature cannot bear, without distraction, death, or hindrance of duty. But few are guilty of this ; but towards the creature, passions may easily exceed : and in external actions towards God or man there may be excess. But especially in point of judgment, it is easy to slide from extreme into extreme. 2. And you must know in every duty you do, and every sin which you avoid, and every truth you receive, what is the contrary or extreme to that particular truth, or sin, or duty ; and keep it in your eye. If you do not thus watch, you will reel like a drunken man from side to side, and never walk uprightly with God. You will turn from prodigality to covetousness, from cruel persecution to libertinism, or from libertinism to persecuting cruelty, from hypocritical formality to hypocritical pretended spirituality, or from enthusiasms and faction to dead formality. But of this I have spoken at large, Chap. v. Part II. " Directions to Students."

Tempt. xxiv. ' On the contrary, the tempter usually pleadeth moderation and prudence against a holy life, and accurate, zealous obedience to God ; and would make you believe, that to be so diligent in duty, and scrupulously afraid of sin, is to run into an extreme ; and to be righteous over-much, and to make religion a vexatious, or distracting thing, and that it is more ado than needs.'

Direct. xxiv. This I have answered so oft, that I shall here say but this : that God cannot be too much loved : nor heaven too much valued, nor too diligently sought or obeyed : nor sin and hell be too much avoided : nor doth any man need to fear doing too much, where he is sure, when he hath done his best, to do too little. Hearken what men say of this at death.

Tempt. xxv. ' The tempter would persuade us, that one sin is necessary to avoid another ; and that of two evils you must choose the less, as if there were no other way. Thus

James and John did by sinful, uncharitable zeal, desire to punish sin¹: Peter would sinfully fight against the sinful Jews². Thus he bids men lie, to avoid some dishonour to God and religion; and persecute, to preserve the unity of the church; and keep out sin; and commit a lesser sin themselves, to escape a greater.'

Direct. xxv. This is to abuse God, as if he had made that necessary which he forbids, and had not provided you lawful means enough to use against every sin. This is wilfully to do that, which you pretend you are unwilling to do, even to sin. Of two evils avoid both, but be sure you consent to neither.

Tempt. xxvi. 'He pleadeth Christian liberty, to entice to sin, especially to sensuality.' Hath not Christ purchased you liberty to use the creatures? All things are yours. No men but the godly have just title to them.'

Direct. xxvi. He never purchased us liberty to abuse the creature, as poison to hurt ourselves; to hinder mortification, and strengthen our enemy, and our snare, and to steal away our hearts from God. It is a liberty from sin, and not a liberty to sin, that Christ hath purchased us.

Tempt. xxvii. 'He pleadeth the necessity of wife, children, estate, life, &c. Necessity makes it lawful.'

Direct. xxvii. There is no necessity of sinning. He cannot be Christ's disciple, that thinks it more necessary to save his life, or provide for wife, and children than to obey his Lord; God must be trusted with these.

Tempt. xxviii. 'But, saith the tempter, it is natural to lust, to love honour, ease, pleasure, &c.; therefore it is no sin.'

Direct. xxviii. Nature is corrupted and sinful; and it is natural to you to be rational, and to rule your sense and appetite by reason, and not to do what lust or appetite desireth: else man is but a beast.

Tempt. xxix. 'But, saith the tempter, authority commandeth it: it is your parent's, or master's will, and you must obey.'

Direct. xxix. There is no power but from God; therefore none against him, or above him. They must be obeyed

¹ Luke ix. 54.

² Matt. xxvi. 52.

in all things lawful, but not in sin. They cannot save you nor themselves from the wrath of God.

Tempt. xxx. 'But, saith the tempter, you have promised or vowed that you will do it, and are not at liberty.'

Direct. xxx. The vow of a lawful thing must be kept; but if you vow to sin, it is another sin to perform it, and to wrong God or man because you have vowed to wrong him.

Tempt. xxxi. 'But, saith the tempter, it is a controversy, and many learned and good men think it is no sin.'

Direct. xxxi. You have the more reason to be fearful and cautelous, when you see that the case is so obscure, and the snare so subtle, and are sure that many learned and good men on one side or other are deceived before you. Remember, God is your king and judge, who will not take it for an excuse for sin, that learned or good men did it, or defended it. Consult not with flesh and blood, but with God.

Tempt. xxxii. 'But, saith the tempter, will you be singular, and be pointed or hooted at by all?'

Direct. xxxii. In doctrine I will not be singular from the Holy Catholic Church of God: in worship I will not in singularity or schism separate from the communion of saints; but in doctrine I will be singular from infidels and heretics; and in a holy life I will be singular from the ungodly, and profane, and sensual; lest if I do as they, to avoid their scorns, I speed as they.

Tempt. xxxiii. 'But you are weak, and you cannot help it, till God will give you grace to do it.'

Direct. xxxiii. Therefore I must not be wilful, and negligent, and rash, and do that evil which I may forbear, nor resist and refuse that grace, and help, and mercy, without which I can do nothing.

Tempt. xxxiv. 'But you repent, and ask God forgiveness through Christ, every night, for the sins of the day.'

Direct. xxxiv. Repenting is a sorrowful turning of the heart from sin to God. You repent not if you turn not. To mock God with such hypocritical praying and repenting, is itself a heinous sin. Will you take it for repenting, if a man that spits in your face and beateth you, shall do it every day, and ask your forgiveness at night, and purpose to do it still, because he asked forgiveness?

Tempt. xxxv. ‘But every man sinneth daily: you do but as the best men in the world do.’

Direct. xxxv. No true Christian that is justified, hath any sin, but what he hateth more than loveth, and would fain be rid of, and striveth against in the use of holy means. He hath no beloved sin which he would not part with, but had rather keep than leave.

Tempt. xxxvi. ‘But those that seem strict and godly are hypocrites, and secretly as bad as you.’

Direct. xxxvi. This is just like the devil, the accuser of those that are sanctified and justified by Christ: the father of malice and lies: to charge that on them, which he confesseth is secret and he cannot prove. So he said of Job, that if he were touched in his estate or body, he would forsake his godliness: but he was found a liar. But be it how it will, I am sure I must be holy or I shall not see God, and if “I live after the flesh I shall die¹” and other men’s misery will be no ease to me.

Tempt. xxxvii. ‘But, saith the tempter, if you will not sin, come but near it, and do that which is lawful.’

Direct. xxxvii. Indeed we must not run into a contrary extreme, under pretence of flying far enough from sin: but if you keep out of other sin, you cannot go too far from any. To be near sin, is to be near God’s wrath, and near that which tendeth to hell fire. And to come near it is the common way of coming to it. He that could wish he might do it, is infected at the heart already. Keep a tender conscience, and a constant sense of the danger of sinning.

Tempt. xxxviii. ‘It is a great snare, when sin is got into credit, 1. By putting fair names upon it, calling luxury and gluttony keeping a good house, and a good table; tippling is called, drinking a cup with a friend; lust and filthiness are called love; worldliness is called thriftiness and good husbandry; idleness and loss of time are called the leisure of a gentleman; slothfulness is called a not being too worldly; time wasting sports are called recreations; pride is called decency and handsomeness; proud revenge is called honour and gallantry; Romish cruelty, and persecution, and wasting the church, are called keeping up order, obedience, and unity; disobedience to superiors is

¹ Heb. xii. 14. Rom. viii. 9. 13.

called not fearing man; church-divisions are called strictness and zeal. 2. Especially if a sin be not in disgrace among the stricter sort, it greatly prepareth men to commit it: as breaking the Lord's day, beyond sea, in many reformed churches: and at home, spiritual pride, censoriousness, backbiting, disobedience, and church-divisions are not in half that disgrace among many professors of strictness, as they deserve, and as swearing, &c. are.'

Direct. xxxviii. Remember, that whatever be the name or cloak, God judgeth righteously, according to the truth: names may deceive us, but not our Judge. And sin is still in disgrace with God, however it be with men. Remember, the more comely the paint and cover are, the greater is the danger, and the more watchful and cautelous we should be. It is not imperfect man, but the perfect law of God, which must be our rule. The great success of this temptation should deter us from entertaining it. What abundance of mischief hath it done in the world!

Tempt. xxxix. 'Sometimes, the devil tempteth men to some heinous sin, that, if he prevail not, at least he may draw them into a less. As cheating chafferers will ask twice the price of their commodity, that, by abating much, they may make you willing to give too much. He that would get a little, must ask a great deal. He will tempt you to drunkenness, and if he draw you but to tippling or time-wasting, he hath got something. If he tempt you to fornication, and he get you but to some filthy thoughts or immodest, lascivious talk or actions, he hath done much of that which he intended. If he tempt you to some horrid cruelty, and you yield but to some less degree, or to some unjust or uncharitable censures, you think you have conquered, when it is he that conquereth.'

Direct. xxxix. Remember, that the least degree of sin is sin, and "death the wages of it." Think not that you have escaped well, if your hearts have taken any of the infection, or if you have been wounded any where, though it might have been worse. If the tempter had tempted you no further but to a lustful, malicious, or proud thought or word, you would perceive that if he prevail, he conquereth: so may you when he getteth this much, by a shameless asking more.

Tempt. xL. 'He tempteth us sometimes, to be so fearful and careful against one sin, or about some one danger, as to be mindless of some other, and lie open to his temptation. Like a fencer that will seem to aim all at one place, but he may strike you in another while you are guarding that. Or like an enemy, that giveth all the alarm at one end of the city, that he may draw the people thither, while a stormeth in another place. So satan makes some so afraid of worldliness, that they watch not against idleness ; or so fearful of hardheartedness, and deadness, and hypocrisy, that they watch not against passion, neglect of their callings, or dejectedness ; or so fearful of sinning or being deceived about their salvation, that they fear not the want of love, and joy, and thankfulness for all the mercy they have received, nor the neglect of holy praise to God.'

Direct. xL. Remember, that as obedience must be entire and universal, so is satan's temptation against all parts of our obedience ; and our care must extend to all if we will escape. It would cure your inordinate fear in some one point, if you extended it to all the rest.

Tempt. xLI. 'Sometimes, by the suddenness of a temptation, he surpriseth men before they are aware.'

Direct. xLI. Be never unarmed nor from your watch : especially as to thoughts, or sudden passions, or rash words, which are used to be committed for want of deliberation.

Tempt. xLII. 'Sometimes, he useth a violent earnestness, especially when he getteth passion on his side. So that reason is borne down ; and the sinner saith, 'I could not forbear.'

Direct. xLII. But remember, that the very eager unruliness of your passion, is a sin in itself : and that none can compel you to sin : and that reason must deliberate and rule ; or else any murder or wickedness may have the excuse of urgent passions.

Tempt. xLIII. 'Sometimes he useth the violence of sin : they threaten men, to frighten them into sin.'

Direct. xLIII. But are not God and his threatenings more to be feared ? Do men threaten imprisonment, or death, or pain ? And doth not God threaten everlasting misery ? And can he not defend you from all that man shall threaten, if it be best for you ? See the portion of the fearful, Rev. xxi. 8.

Tempt. XLIV. ‘ Sometimes variety of temptations distracteth men, that they do not look to all at once.’

Direct. XLIV. Remember, that one part of the city unguarded, may lose the whole in a general assault.

Tempt. XLV. ‘ Sometimes he ceaseth, to make us secure, and lay by our arms, and then surpriseth us.’

Direct. XLV. Take heed of security, and satau’s ambushments. Distinguish between cessation and conquest. You conquer not every time that you have rest and quietness from temptation. Till the sin be hated, and the contrary grace or duty in practice, you have not at all overcome ; and when that is done, yet trust not the devil or the flesh ; nor think the war will be shorter than your lives, for one assault will begin where the other ended. Make use of every cessation but to prepare for the next encounter.

Tempt. XLVI. ‘ He will tempt you to take striving for overcoming ; and to think because you pray and make some resistance that sin is conquered ; and because your desires are good, all is well.’

Direct. XLVI. But all that fight do not overcome : “ If a man strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully^m.” “ Many will seek to enter and shall not be ableⁿ.”

Tempt. XLVII. ‘ He followeth the sinner with frequency and importunity, till he weary him and make him yield.’

Direct. XLVII. 1. Remember, that Christ is as importunate with thee to save thee, as the devil can be to damn thee ; and which then should prevail ? 2. Be you as constant in resistance : be as oft in prayer and other confirming means. Do as Paul^o, who prayed thrice (as Christ did in his agony), when the prick in the flesh was not removed. 3. Tempt not the tempter, by giving him encouragement : a faint denial is an invitation to ask again. Give him quickly a flat denial, and put him out of hope, if you would shorten the temptation.

Tempt. XLVIII. ‘ Lastly, The devil would sink the sinner in despair, and persuade him now it is too late.’

Direct. XLVIII. Observe his design, that it is but to take off that hope which is the weight to set the wheels of the soul agoing. In all, he is against God and you : in

^m 1 Tim. ii. 5.

ⁿ Luke xiii. 24.

^o 2 Cor. xii. 7, 8.

other sins he is against God's authority ; in this he is against his love and mercy. Read the Gospel and you will find, that Christ's death is sufficient, the promise is universal, full and free, and that the day of grace is so far continued till the day of death, and no man shall be denied it that truly desireth it : and, that the same God that forbiddeth thy presumption, forbiddeth also thy despair.

Temptations to draw us off from Duty.

Tempt. i. ' The greatest temptation against duty is, by persuading men that it is no duty. Thus in our days we have seen almost all duty cast off by this erroneous fancy. One saith, ' that the holy observation of the Lord's day is not commanded of God in Scripture.' Another saith, ' What Scripture have you for family prayer, or singing psalms, or baptising infants, or praying before and after sermon, or for your office, ordination, tithes, churches, &c. Another saith, ' That church government and discipline are not of divine institution.' Another saith, that ' baptism and the Lord's supper were but for that age.' And thus all duty is taken down instead of doing it.'

Direct. i. Read and fear, Matt. v. 19. " Whosoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven ; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." Denying duty, is too easy a way of evading obedience, to serve turn. Denying the laws that bind you to public payments will not save you from them ; but for all that if you deny, you must be distrained on. And God will make it dearer to you, if you put him to distrain on you for duty. Must he go to law with you for it ? He will quickly shew you law for it, and prove that it was your duty. Open your doubts to able men, and you will hear more evidence than you know ; but if pride and false-heartedness blind you, you must bear your punishment.

Tempt. ii. ' Saith the tempter, ' it is a duty to weak ones, but not for you : you must not be still under ordinances, in the lower form : every day must be a Sabbath

to you, and every bit a sacrament, and every place as a church: you must live above ordinances in Christ.'

Direct. II. We must live against Mosaical ordinances^p; but not above Christ's ordinances: unless you will live above obedience, and above the government of Christ^q. Hath not Christ appointed the ministry, and church-helpers, "till we all come to a perfect man^r?" and promised to "be with them to the end of the world^s?" It is befooling pride that can make you think you have no need of Christ's instituted means.

Tempt. III. 'But thou art unworthy to pray or receive the sacrament: it is not for dogs.'

Direct. III. The wilful, impenitent refusers of grace, are unworthy. The willing soul, that fain would be what God would have him, hath an accepted worthiness in Christ.

Tempt. IV. 'But while you doubt, you do it not in faith; and therefore to you it is sin.'

Direct. IV. But is it not a greater sin to leave it undone? Will doubting of all duty excuse you from it? Then you have an easy way to be free from all! Do but doubt whether you should believe in God, or Christ, or love him, or live a godly life, and it seems you think it will excuse you. But if you doubt whether you should feed your child, you deserve to be hanged for murdering it, if you famish it. If you doubt of duty, it is duty still, and you are first bound to lay by your doubts. But things indifferent, left to your choice, must not be done with a doubtful conscience: it was of such things that Paul spake.

Tempt. V. 'The devil puts somewhat still in the way, that seemeth necessary, to thrust out duty.'

Direct. V. God hath not set you work, which he alloweth you no time for. Is all your time spent in better things? Is it not your carnal mind that makes you think carnal things most needful? Christ saith, "One thing is needful^t." "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you^u." Had you that love and delight in holiness as you should, you would find time for it. An unwelcome guest is put off with any excuse.

^p Col. ii. 18. 21.

^r Ephes. iv. 13.

^t Luke x. 42.

^q See my two sheets for the Ministry.

^s Matt. xxviii. 20.

^u Matt. vi. 33.

Others, as poor as you, can find time for duty, because they are willing. Set your business in order, and let every thing keep its proper place, and you may have time for every duty.

Tempt. vi. 'But you are so unable and unskilful to pray, to learn, that it is as good never meddle with it.'

Direct. vi. Set yourselves to learn, and mark those that have skill: and do what you can. You must learn by practice: the unskilfullest duty is better than none. Unworded groans come oft from the Spirit of God, and God understandeth and accepteth them^x.

Tempt. vii. 'It will be so hard and long to learn, that you will never overcome it.'

Direct. vii. Willingness and diligence have the promise of God's help. Remember, it is a thing that must be done. When your own disuse and sin have made it hard, will you put God and your souls off with that as an excuse? If you had neglected to teach your child to speak or go when it is young, should he therefore never learn? Will you despair, and let go all your hope on this pretence? Or will you hope to be saved without prayer and other holy duty? How foolish are both these? Sick men must eat, though their stomachs be against it: they cannot live else.

Tempt. viii. 'But thou findest thou art but the worse for duty, and never the better for it.'

Direct. viii. Satan will do what he can to make it go worse with you after than before. He will discourage you if he can, by hindering your success, that he may make you think it is to no purpose: so, many preachers, because they have fished long and caught nothing, grow cold and heartless, and ready to sit down and say, as Jeremiah, "I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name^y." So in prayer, sacrament, reproof, &c. the devil makes great use of this, What good hath it done thee? But patience and perseverance win the crown. The beginning is seldom a time to perceive success: the carpenter is long at work before he rear a house; nature brings not forth the plant or birth the first day. Your life-time is your working time. Do your part, and God will not fail on his part. It is his part to give success; and dare you accuse him, or suspect

^x Rom. viii. 26, 27.

^y Jer. xx. 9.

him? There is more of the success of prayer to be believed than to be felt. If God have promised to hear he doth hear, and we must believe it whether we feel it or not. Prayers are often heard long before the thing is sent us that we prayed for: we pray for heaven, but shall not be there till death. If Moses's message to Pharaoh ten times seem lost, it is not lost for all that. What work would ever have been done, if on the first conceit of unsuccessfulness it had been given off? Be glad that thou hast time to plough and sow, to do thy part, and if God will give thee fruit at last.

Tempt. ix. 'But, saith the tempter, it goeth worse with thee in the world, since thou settest thyself to read, and pray, and live obediently: thou hast been poorer, and more despised since, than ever before: Thou art "a derision daily, every one mocketh thee".'² This thou gettest by it.

Direct. ix. He began not well, that counted not that it might cost him more than this to be a holy Christian: if God in heaven be not enough to be thy portion, never serve him, but find something better if thou canst. He that cannot lose the world cannot use it as he ought. If thou hadst rather be at the devil's finding and usage than at God's, thou art worthy to speed accordingly. Nay, if thou think thy soul itself worse, remember that we are not worst when we are troubled most: physic makes sick, when it works aright.

Tempt. x. 'Satan filleth many with abundance of scruples about every duty, that they come to it as sick persons to their meat, with a peevish, quarrelling disposition. This aileth, and that aileth it; something is still amiss, that they cannot get it down; this fault the minister hath in praying or preaching; or the other circumstance is amiss, or the other fault is in the company that join with them: and all is to turn them off from all.'

Direct. x. But do you mend the matter by casting off all, or by running into greater inconveniences? Is not their imperfect prayer and communion better than your idle neglect of all, or unwarrantable division? It is a sign of an upright heart to be most about heart-observation, and quarrelsome with themselves; and the mark of hypocrites to be

² Jer. xx. 8.

most quarrelsome against the manner of other men's performances, and to be easily driven by any pretences from the worship of God and communion of saints.

Tempt. xi. 'The devil will set one duty against another : reading against hearing ; praying against preaching ; private against public ; outward and inward worship against each other ; mercy and justice, piety and charity, against each other ; and still labour to eject the greater.'

Direct. xi. The work of God is an harmonious and well-composed frame : if you leave out a part you spoil the whole, and disadvantage yourselves to all the rest ; place them aright, and each part helpeth and not hindereth another ; plead one for another, but cast by none.

Tempt. xii. 'The commonest and sorest temptation is by taking away our appetite to holy duties, by abating our feeling of our own necessity : when the soul is sleepy and feeleth no need of prayer, or reading, or hearing, or meditating, but thinks itself tolerably well without it ; or else grows sick and is against it, and troubled to use it ; so that every duty is like eating to a sick stomach, then it is easy to tempt it to neglect or omit many a duty : a little thing will serve to put it by, when men feel no need of it.'

Direct. xii. O keep up a lively sense of your necessities : remember still that time is short, and death is near, and you are too unready. Keep acquaintance with your hearts and lives, and every day will tell you of your necessities, which are greatest when they are least perceived.

Tempt. xiii. 'The tempter gets much by ascribing the success of holy means to our own endeavour, or to chance, or something else, and making us overlook that present benefit, which would greatly encourage us : as when we are delivered from sickness or danger upon prayer, he tells you so you might have been delivered if you had never prayed. Was it not by the physician's care and skill, and by such an excellent medicine ? If you prosper in any business, Was it not by your own contrivance and diligence ?'

Direct. xiii. This separating God and means, when God worketh by means, is the folly of atheists. When God heareth thy prayer in sickness or other danger, he sheweth it by directing the physician or thyself to the fittest means, and blessing that means ; and he is as really the cause, and

prayer the first means, as if he wrought thy deliverance by a miracle. Do not many use the same physician, and medicine, and labour, and diligence, who yet miscarry? Just observation of the answers of prayer might do much to cure this. All our industry may say as Peter and John, "Why look ye so earnestly on us, as if by our own power or holiness we had done this?" when God is glorifying his grace, and owning his appointed means.

Tempt. xiv. 'Lastly, the devil setteth up something else in opposition to holy duty, to make it seem unnecessary. In some he sets up their good desires, and saith, God knoweth thy heart without expressing it; and thou mayst have as good a heart at home as at church. In some he sets up superstitious fopperies of man's devising, instead of God's institution. In some he pretendeth the Spirit against external duty, and saith, The Spirit is all; the flesh profiteth nothing. Yea, in some he sets up Christ himself against Christ's ordinances, and saith, It is not these, but Christ, that profits you.'

Direct. xiv. This is distracted contradiction: to set Christ against Christ, and the Spirit against the ordinances of the Spirit. Is it not Christ and the Spirit that appointed them? Doth he not best know in what way he will give his grace? Can you not preserve the soul and life, without killing the body? Cannot you have the water, and value the cistern or spring, without cutting off the pipes that must convey it? O wonderful! that satan could make men so mad, as this reasoning hath shewed us that many are in our days. And to set up superstition or pretend a good heart against God's worship is to accuse him that appointed it of doing he knew not what, and to think that we are wiser than he! And to shew a good heart by disobedience, pride, contempt of God and of his mercies!

Temptations to frustrate holy Duties, and make them ineffectual.

The devil is exceeding diligent in this: 1. That he may make the soul despair, and say, Now I have used all means in vain; there is no hope. 2. To double the sinner's misery, by turning the very remedy into a disease. 3. To shew his

malice against Christ, and say, I have turned thy own means to thy dishonour.

Consider, therefore, how greatly we are concerned to do the work of God effectually. Means well used are the way to more grace, to communion with God, and to salvation ; but ill used, they dishonour and provoke him, and destroy ourselves : like children that cut their fingers with a knife, when they should cut their meat with it.

Tempt. i. ‘ Duty is frustrated by false ends : As 1. To procure God to bear with them in their sin : (whereas it is the use of duty to destroy sin.) 2. To make God satisfaction for sin (which is the work of Christ). 3. To merit grace (when the imperfection merits wrath). 4. To prosper in the world and escape affliction^b (and so they are but serving their flesh, and desiring God to serve it). 5. To quiet conscience in a course of sin (by sinning more in offering the sacrifice of fools). 6. To be approved of men (and verily they have their reward^c). 7. To be saved when they can keep the world and sin no longer, (that is, to obtain that the Gospel may all be false and God unjust.)’

Direct. i. First see that the heart be honest, and God, and heaven, and holiness most desired, else all that you do will want right ends.

Tempt. ii. ‘ When ignorance or error make men take God for what he is not, thinking blasphemously of him, as if he were like them, and liked their sins, or were no lover of holiness ; they frustrate all their worship of him.’

Direct. ii. Study God in his Son, in his Word, in his saints, in his works : know him as described before, Chap. iii. *Direct.* iv., and see that your wicked, corrupted hearts, or wilful forgetting him, blind not your understandings.

Tempt. iii. ‘ To come to God in ourselves and out of Christ, and use his name but customarily, and not in faith and confidence.’

Direct. iii. Know well your sin, and vileness, and desert, and the justice and holiness of God, and then you will see that if Christ reconcile you not, and justify you not by his blood, and do not sanctify and help you by his Spirit, and make you sons of God, and intercede not for you, there is no access to God, nor standing in his sight.

^b James iv. 3.

^c Matt. vi. 5.

Tempt. iv. 'The tempter would have you pray hypocritically, with the tongue only without the heart: to put off God with a few customary words, with seeming to pray (as they do the poor, James ii. with a few empty words) either in a form of words not understood, or not considered, or not felt and much regarded; or in more gross hypocrisy, praying for the holiness which they will not have, and against the sin which they will not part with.'

Direct. iv. O fear the holy, jealous, heart-searching God that hateth hypocrisy, and will be worshipped seriously in spirit and truth, and will be sanctified of all that draw near him^d, and saith they "worship him in vain, that draw nigh him with the lips, when the heart is far from him^e." See God by faith, as present with thee, and know thyself, and it will awaken thee to seriousness^f.

Tempt. v. 'He would destroy faith and hope, and make you doubt whether you shall get any thing by duty.'

Direct. v. But, 1. Why should God command it, and promise us his blessing if he meant not to perform it? 2. Remember God's infiniteness, and omnipresence, and allsufficiency: he is as verily with thee, as thou art there: he upholdeth thee: he sheweth by his mercies, that he regardeth thee; and by his regarding lower things: and if he regard thee, he doth regard thy duties. It is all one with him to hear thy prayers, as if he had never another creature to regard and hear. Believe then, and hope and wait upon him.

Tempt. vi. 'Sometimes the tempter will promise you more by holy duty, than God doth, and make you expect deliverance from every enemy, want and sickness, and speedier deliverance of soul, than ever God promised; and all this is to make you cast away all as vain, and think God faileth you, when you miss your expectations.'

Direct. vi. But God will do all that he promiseth, but not all that the devil and yourselves promise. See what God promiseth in his Word. That is enough for you. Make that and no more the end of duties.

Tempt. vii. 'The tempter usually would draw you from the heart and life of duty, by ascribing too much to the outside: laying too much on the bare doing of the work, the giving of the alms, the hearing of the sermons, the say-

^d Lev. x. 3.^e Matt. xv 8, 9.^f See Heb. iv. 13. Hos. viii. 12, 13.

ing of the words, the handsome expression, order, manner ; which in their places are all good, if animated with spirit, life and seriousness.'

Direct. VII. Look most and first to the soul in duty, and the soul of duty. The picture of meat feedeth not ; the picture of fire warmeth not : fire and shadows will not nourish us. God loveth not dead carcasses instead of spiritual worship ; we regard not words ourselves, further than they express the heart. Let the outer part have but its due.

Tempt. VIII. ' He tempteth you to rest in a forced, affected, counterfeit fervency, stirred up by a desire to take with others.'

Direct. VIII. Look principally at God and holy motives, and less at men, that all your fire be holy, fetched from heaven.

Tempt. IX. ' He would keep you in a lazy, sluggish coldness to read, and hear, and pray as asleep, as if you did it not.'

Direct. IX. Awake yourselves with the presence of God, and the great concernment of what you are about, and yield not to your sloth.

Tempt. X. ' He would make you bring a divided, distracted heart to duty, that is half about your worldly business.'

Direct. X. Remember God is jealous, your business with him is great, much lieth on it, call off your hearts, and let them not stay behind ; all the powers of your souls are little enough in such a work^s.

Tempt. XI. ' Ignorance, unskilfulness, and unacquaintance with duty, are a great impediment to most.'

Direct. XI. Learn by study joined with practice : be not weary, and difficulties will be overcome.

Tempt. XII. ' Putting duty out of its place, and neglecting the season that is fittest, makes it oft done slightly.'

Direct. XII. Redeem time, and dispatch other business, that idleness deprive you not of leisure : and do all in order.

Tempt. XIII. ' Neglecting one duty is the tempter's snare to spoil another. If he can keep you from reading, you will not understand well what you hear : if he keep you from meditating, you will not digest what you hear or read. If he keep you from hearing, you will want both matter and life for prayer, and meditation, and conference : if he keep

you from godly company, you will be hindered in all, and in the practice: no one is omitted, but you are disadvantaged by it in all the rest.'

Direct. xiii. Observe how one duty helpeth another, and take all together each one in its place.

Tempt. xiv. 'Sometimes the tempter doth call you off to other duty, and puts in unseasonable motions to that which in its time is good: he interrupts prayer by meditation, he sets seeming truth against love, and peace, and concord.'

Direct. xiv. Still know which duties are greatest, and which is the due season for each, and do all in order.

Tempt. xv. 'He spoileth duty, by causing you to do it only as a duty, and not as a means for the good of your own souls, or only as a means, and not as a duty: if you do it only as a duty, then you will not be quickened to it by the ends and benefits, nor carried by hope, nor fit all to the end, nor be so fervent or vigorous in it, as the sense of your own good would make you be. And if you do it only as a means, and not as a duty, then you will give over or faint, when you want or question the success: whereas, the sense of both would make you vigorous and constant.'

Direct. xv. Keep under the sense of God's authority, that you may feel yourselves bound to obey him, whatever be the success; and may resolve to wait in an obedient way. And withal, admire his wisdom in fitting all duties to your benefit, and commanding you nothing but what is for your own, or others' good, or to his honour: and mark the reason and tendency of all; and your own necessity.

Tempt. xvi. 'The tempter hindereth you in duty, as well as from duty, by setting you a quarrelling with the minister, the words, the company, the manner, the circumstances; that these things may divert your thoughts from the matter, or distract your mind with causeless scruples.'

Direct. xvi. Pray and labour for a clear judgment, and an upright, self-judging, humble heart, which dwelleth most at home, and looketh most at the spiritual part, and affecteth not singularity.

Tempt. xvii. 'The tempter spoileth duty by your inconstancy: while you read or pray so seldom, that you have

not the benefit of one duty, before you come to another, and cool by intermissions.'

Direct. xvii. Remember that it is not your divertisement, but your calling, and is to your soul, as eating to your bodies.

Tempt. xviii. 'Sometimes satan corrupteth duty by men's private passions, interest, and opinions, making men, in preaching and praying, to vent their own conceits and spleen, and inveigh against those that differ from them, or offend them, and profane the name and work of God: or proudly to seek the praise of men.'

Direct. xviii. Remember that God is most jealous in his worship, and hateth hypocritical profaneness, above all profaneness. Search your hearts, and mortify your passions; and especially selfishness, remembering that it is a poisonous and insinuating sin, and will easily hide itself with a cloak of zeal.

Tempt. xix. 'False-hearted reservedness is a most accursed corrupter of holy duty: when the soul is not wholly given up to God, but sets upon duty from some common motive; as, because it is in credit, or to please some friend, purposing to try it awhile, and leave it, if they like it not.'

Direct. xix. Fear God, thou hypocrite, and halt not between two opinions. If the Lord be God, obey and serve him with all thy heart: but, if the devil and the flesh be better masters, follow them, and let him go.

Tempt. xx. Lastly, 'The tempter hindereth holy duty much, by wandering thoughts, and melancholy perplexities, and a hurry of temptations, which torment and distract some Christians, so that they cry out, 'I cannot pray, I cannot meditate;' and are weary of duty, and even of their lives.'

Direct. xx. This sheweth the malice of the tempter, and his weakness; but, if thou hadst rather be delivered from it, it hindereth not thy acceptance with God. Read for this, what I have said Chap. v. Part 2. at large; especially in my Directions to the Melancholy.

I have been forced to put off many things briefly here, which deserved a larger handling; and I must now omit the discovery of those temptations, by which satan keepeth men in sin, when he hath drawn them into it. 2. And those

by which he causeth declining in grace, and apostacy. 3. And those by which he discomforteth true believers; because else this Direction would swell to a treatise; and most will think it too long and tedious already, though the brevity which I use, to avoid prolixity, doth wrong the matter through the whole. Acquaintance with temptations is needful to our overcoming them.

Grand Direct. x. ‘Your lives must be laid out in doing God service, and doing all the good you can, in works of piety, justice, and charity, with prudence, fidelity, industry, zeal, and delight; remembering that you are engaged to God, as servants to their Lord and master; and are entrusted with his talents, of the improvement whereof you must give account.’

The next relation between Christ and us, which we are to speak of, (subordinate to that of King and Subjects,) is this of Master and Servants. Though Christ saith to the apostles, “Henceforth I call you not servants, but friends^b,” the meaning is not that he calleth them not servants at all, but not mere servants, they being more than servants, having such acquaintance with his counsels as his friends. For he presently, verse 20. bids them “Remember that the servant is not greater than the lord.” And John xiii. 13. “Ye call me Master and Lord; and ye say well, for so I am.” And Matt. xxiii. 8. “One is your Master, Christ; and all ye are brethren:” so ver. 10. And the apostles called themselves the “servants of Jesus Christⁱ,” and “of God^k.”

He is called our Master, and we his servants, because he is our Rector, ‘ex pleno dominio’ with absolute propriety, and doth not give us laws to obey, while we do our own work, but giveth us his work to do, and laws for the right doing of it: and it is a service under his eye, and in dependence on him for our daily provisions, as servants on their lord. God hath work for us to do in the world; and the performance of it he will require. God biddeth his sons, “Go work to day in my vineyard^l,” and expecteth that they do it^m. His “servants” are as “husbandmen,” to whom “he entrusteth his vineyard, that he may receive the fruitⁿ.”

^a John xv. 5. ⁱ Rom. i. 1. and 1 Cor. iv. 1. Phil. i. 1. ^k Tit. i. 1.

^l Matt. xxi. 28.

^m Ver. 31.

ⁿ Ver. 33, 34, 41, 43.

“Faithful servants” shall be “made rulers over his household^o.” Christ delivereth to his servants his talents to improve, and will require an account of the improvement at his coming^p. Good works, in the proper, comprehensive sense, are all actions internal and external, that are morally good : but in the narrower acceptation, they are works, not only formally good, as acts of obedience in general, but also materially good, such as a servant doth for his master, that tend to his advantage, or the profit of some other, whose welfare he regardeth. Because the doctrine of Good Works is controverted in these times, I shall first open it briefly, and then give you the Directions.

1. Nothing is more certain, than that God doth not need the service of any creature ; and that he receiveth no addition to his perfection or felicity from it ; and, consequently, that on terms of commutative justice, (which giveth one thing for another, as in selling and buying,) no creature is capable of meriting at his hands.

2. It is certain, that on the terms of the law of works, (which required perfect obedience as the condition of life,) no sinner can do any work so good, as in point of distributive, governing justice, shall merit at his hands.

3. It is certain, that Christ hath so fulfilled the law of works, as to merit for us.

4. The redeemed are not masterless, but have still a Lord, who hath now a double right to govern them : and this governor giveth them a law : and this law requireth us to do good works, as much as we are able, (though not so terribly, yet) as obligingly as the law of works : and by this (of Christ) we must be judged : and thus we must be judged according to our works : and to be judged is nothing else but to be justified or condemned. Such works, therefore, are rewardable according to the distributive justice of the law of grace, by which we must be judged. And the ancient fathers, who (without any opposition) spoke of good works as meritorious with God, meant no more, but that they were such as the righteous Judge of the world will reward, according to the law of grace, by which he judgeth us. And this doctrine being agreed on as certain truth, there is no controversy left with them, but whether the

^o Matt. xxiv. 45, 46.

^p Matt. xxv. 14.

word 'merit' was properly or improperly used: and that both Scripture, and our common speech, alloweth the fathers' use of the word, I have shewed at large in my "Confession."

5. Christ is so far from redeeming us from a necessity of good works, that he died to restore us to a capacity and ability to perform them; and hath new-made us for that end. "He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works^a." "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them^r."

6. Good works opposed to Christ, or his satisfaction, merit, righteousness, mercy, or free-grace, in the matter of justification or salvation, are not good works, but proud self-confidence and sin: but good works, in their due subordination to God's mercy, and Christ's merits and grace, are necessary and rewardable.

7. Though God need none of our works, yet that which is good materially pleaseth him, as it tendeth to his glory, and to our own and others' benefit, which he delighteth in.

8. It is the communicating of his goodness and excellencies to the creature, by which God doth glorify himself in the world: and in heaven, where is the fullest communication, he is most glorified: therefore the praise which is given to the creature, who receiveth all from him, is his own praise. And it is no dishonour to God, that his creature be honoured, by being good, and being esteemed good: otherwise, God would never have created any thing, lest it should derogate from himself: or, he would have made them bad, lest their goodness were his dishonour; and he would be most pleased with the wicked, and least pleased with the best, as most dishonouring him. But madness itself abhorreth these conceits.

9. Therefore, as an act of mercy to us, and for his own glory, (as at first he made all things very good, so) he will make the new creature according to his image, which is holy, and just, and good, and will use us in good works; and it is our honour, and gain, and happiness to be so used by him. As he will not communicate light to the world, with-

^a Tit. ii. 14.

^r Ephes. ii. 10.

out the sun, (whose glory derogateth not from his honour :) so will he not do good works in the world, immediately by himself only ; but by his servants, whose calling and daily business it must be, as that which they are made for, as the sun is made to give light and heat to inferior things. “ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven*.” Christ was far from their opinion, that think all good works that are attributed to good men, are dishonourable to God†.

10. He is most beholden to God, that is most exercised in good works. The more we do, the more we receive from him : and our very doing itself is our receiving ; for it is he that “ giveth us both to will and to do,” by his operation in us ; even “ he, without whom we can do nothing*.”

11. The obligation to good works, that is, to works of piety, justice, and charity, is essential to us as servants of the Lord. We are practical atheists, if we do not the works of piety to God : we are rebels against God, and enemies to ourselves, and unmeet for human society, if we do not the works which are good for ourselves, and for others, if we have ability and opportunity. This is our fruit which God expecteth ; and if we bear it not, he will hew us down, and cast us into the fire.

12. Though doing no hurt will not serve turn, without doing good, yet it is not the same works that are required of all, nor in the same degree, but according to every man’s talent and opportunities‡.

13. God looketh not only nor principally at the external part of the work, but much more to the heart of him that doth it : nor at the length of time, but at the sincerity and diligence of his servants. And therefore, though he is so just, as not to deny the reward which was promised them, to those that have borne the burden and heat of the day ; yet is he so gracious and bountiful, that he will give as much,

* Matt. v. 16.

† Vir bonus est qui prodest quibus potest, nocet autem nemini. P. Scalig. Ne pigeat evangelicum ministrum, ægrotum visitare, xenio aliquo recreare, famelicum cibario saltem pane pascere, nudum operire, pauperem cui non est adjutor, à divitum calumniis et potentia eripere, pro afflictis principem magistratumve convenire : rem familiarem consilio augere, morientibus sedulo et benigne astare, lites et dissidia componere, &c. Acosta lib. iv. c. 18. p. 418.

• Phil. ii. 13.

‡ John xv. 5.

‡ Matt. xxv. 14, 15, &c.

to those that he findeth as willing and diligent, and would have done more if they had opportunity^a. You see in all this, what our doctrine is about good works, and how far those Papists are to be believed, who persuade their ignorant disciples, that we account them vain and needless things.

Directions for faithful serving Christ, and doing good.

Direct. i. ‘ Be sure that you have the holiness, justice, and charity within, which are the necessary principles of good works.’—For “a good tree will bring forth good fruit, and an evil tree evil fruit: make the tree good, and the fruit good: a good man out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart, bringeth forth evil things.” As out of the heart proceed evil works^a, so out of the heart must good works come^b. Can the dead do the works of the living? or the unholy do the works of holiness? or the unrighteous do the works of justice? or the uncharitable do the works of charity? Will he do good to Christ in his members on earth, who hateth them? Or will he not rather imprison them, than visit them in prison; and rather strip them of all they have, than feed and clothe them? Or if a man should do that which materially is good, from pride, or other sinful principles, God doth not accept it, but taketh all sacrifice but as carrion, that is offered to him without the heart.

Direct. ii. ‘ Content not yourselves to do some good extraordinarily on the by, or when you are urged to it; but study to do good, and make it the trade or business of your lives.’—Having so many obligations, and so great encouragements, do what you do with all your might. If you would know whether you are servants to Christ, or to the flesh, the question must be, which of these have the main care and diligence of our lives: for as every carnal act will not prove you servants to the flesh, so every good action will not prove you the servants of Christ.

Direct. iii. ‘ Before you do any work, consider, whether you can truly say, it is a service of God, and will be ac-

^a Matt. xx. 12—15.

^a Matt. xv. 19, 20.

^b Matt. vii. 16—20.

cepted by him. See therefore that it be done, 1. To his glory, or to please him. 2. And in obedience to his command.'—Mere natural actions, that have no moral good or evil in them, and so belong not to morality, these belong not to our present subject, as being not the matter of rational (or at least of obediential) choice. Such as the winking of the eye, the setting of this foot forward first, the taking of this or that meat, or drink, or instrument, or company, or action, when they are equal, and it is no matter of rational or obediential choice, &c. But every act that is to be done deliberately and rationally, as matter of choice, must be moralised or made good, by doing it, 1. To a right end; and 2. According to the rule. "Whether we eat, or drink, or whatsoever we do (that is matter of rational choice), must be done by us to the glory of God^c." All works tend not alike to his glory; but some more immediately and directly, and others remotely: but all must ultimately have this end. Even servants that labour in their painful work, must "do it as to the Lord, and not (only, or ultimately) to men, not with eye-service as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ," from whom they must have their greatest reward or punishment^d. All the comforts of food, or rest, or recreation, or pleasure which we take, should be intended to fit us for our master's work, or strengthen, cheer, or help us in it. Do nothing, deliberately, that belongs to the government of reason, but God's service in the world; which you can say, he set you on.

Direct. iv. 'Set not duties of piety, justice, or charity against each other, as if they had an enmity to each other; but take them as inseparable, as God hath made them.'—Think not to offer God a sacrifice of injury, bribery, fraud, oppression, or any uncharitable work. And pretend not the benefit of men, or the safety of societies or kingdoms, for impiety against the Lord^e.

Direct. v. 'Acquaint yourselves with all the talents which you receive from God, and what is the use to which

^c 1 Cor. x. 31.

^d Ephes. vi. 5—8. Col. iii. 22—25.

^e Some think, they merit by curing the hurts which they have caused themselves. Nequitia est, ut extrahas mergere; evertere, ut suscites; ut emittas, includere. Non enim beneficium, injuriæ finis: nec unquam id detraxisse meritum est, quod ipse qui detraxit, intulerat. Seneca de Benef. lib. vi. c. xxvi. Elz. p. 512.

they should be improved.'—Keep thus a just account of your receivings, and what goods of your master's is put into your hands. And make it a principal part of your study, to know what every thing in your hand is good for to your master's use ; and how it is that he would have you use it.

Direct. vi. ' Keep an account of your expences ; at least of all your most considerable talents : and bring yourselves daily or frequently to a reckoning, what good you have done, or attempted to do.'—Every day is given you for some good work. Keep, therefore, accounts of every day : (I mean, in your conscience, not in papers.) Every mercy must be used to some good : call yourselves, therefore, to account for every mercy, what you have done with it for your master's use. And think not hours, and minutes, and little mercies may be passed without coming into the account. The servant that thinks he may do what he list with shillings and pence, and that he is only to lay out greater sums for his master's use, and lesser for his own, will prove unfaithful, and come short in his accounts. Less sums than pounds must be in our reckonings.

Direct. vii. ' Take special heed that the common thief, your carnal self, either personal or in your relations, do not rob God of his expected due, and devour that which he requireth.'—It is not for nothing that God calleth for the first fruits. " Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase : so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine^f." For, if carnal self might first be served, its devouring greediness would leave God nothing. Though he that hath godliness with contentment hath enough, if he have but food and raiment : yet, there will be but enough for themselves and children, where men have many hundreds or thousands a year, if once it fall into this gulf. And, indeed, as he that begins with God, hath the promise of his bountiful supplies ; so he whose flesh must first be served, doth catch such an hydropic thirst for more, that all will but serve it : and the devil contriveth such necessities to these men, and such uses for all they have, that they have

^f Prov. iii. 9, 10. So Exod. xxiii. 16. 19. xxxiv. 22. 26. Lev. ii. 12. 14. Nehem. x. 35. Ezek. xx. 40. xlv. 30. xlviii. 14.

no more to spare than poorer men : and they can allow God no more but the leavings of the flesh, and what it can spare, which commonly is next to nothing. Indeed, though holy uses in particular, were satisfied with first fruits and limited parts, yet God must have all, and the flesh (inordinately or finally) have none. Every penny which is laid out upon ourselves, and children, and friends, must be done as by God's own appointment, and to serve and please him. Watch narrowly, or else this thievish, carnal self will leave God nothing.

Direct. VIII. 'Prefer greater duties (cæteris paribus) before lesser : and labour to understand well, which is the greater, and to be preferred.'—Not that any real duty is to be neglected : but we call that by the name of duty which is materially good, and a duty in its season ; but formally, indeed, it is no duty at all, when it cannot be done without the omission of a greater. As for a minister to be praying with his family, or comforting one afflicted soul, when he should be preaching publicly, is to do that which is a duty in its season, but at that time is his sin. It is an unfaithful servant that is doing some little char, when he should be saving a beast from drowning, or the house from burning, or doing the greater part of his work.

Direct. IX. 'Prudence is exceeding necessary in doing good, that you may discern good from evil, discerning the season, and measure, and manner, and among divers duties, which must be preferred.'—Therefore labour much for wisdom, and if you want it yourself, be sure to make use of theirs that have it, and ask their counsel in every great and difficult case. Zeal without judgment hath not only entangled souls in many heinous sins, but hath ruined churches and kingdoms, and under pretence of exceeding others in doing good, it makes men the greatest instruments of evil. There is scarce a sin so great and odious, but ignorant zeal will make men do it as a good work. Christ told his apostles, that those that killed them, should think they did God service. And Paul bare record to the murderous, persecuting Jews, "that they had a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge." The Papists' murders of Christians under the name of heretics, hath recorded it to the world, in

the blood of many hundred thousands, how ignorant, carnal zeal will do good, and what sacrifice it will offer up to God^s.

Direct. x. ‘In doing good prefer the souls of men before the body, ‘cæteris paribus.’ To convert a sinner from the error of his way is to save a soul from death, and to cover a multitude of sins^b,’—And this is greater than to give a man an alms. As cruelty to souls is the most heinous cruelty, (as persecutors and soul-betraying pastors will one day know to their remediless woe,) so mercy to souls is the greatest mercy. Yet sometimes mercy to the body is in that season to be preferred (for every thing is excellent in its season). As if a man be drowning or famishing, you must not delay the relief of his body, while you are preaching to him for his conversion; but first relieve him, and then you may in season afterwards instruct him. The greatest duty is not always to go first in time; sometimes some lesser work is a necessary preparatory to a greater; and sometimes a corporal benefit may tend more to the good of souls than some spiritual work may. Therefore I say still, that prudence and an honest heart are instead of many directions: they will not only look at the immediate benefit of a work, but to its utmost tendency and remote effects.

Direct. xi. ‘In doing good, prefer the good of many; especially of the church or commonwealth, before the good of one or few¹.’—For many are more worth than one; and many will honour God and serve him more than one: and therefore both piety and charity require it. Yet this also must be understood with a ‘cæteris paribus;’ for it is possible, some cases of exception may be found. Paul’s is a high instance, that “could have wished himself accursed from Christ,” for the sake of the Jews, as judging God’s honour more concerned in all them than in him alone.

Direct. xii. “Prefer a durable good that will extend to posterity, before a short and transitory good.”—As to build

§ ‘Sell all and give to the poor, and follow me.’ But sell not all, except thou follow me: that is, except thou have a vocation, in which thou mayst do, as much good with little means, as with great. Lord Bacon’s Essay 13.

^b Jam. v. 20.

¹ Absurdum est unum laute vivere, cum multi esuriunt. Quanto enim gloriosius est multis benefacere, quam magnifice habitare? Quanto prudentius in homines quam in lapides, et in aurum impensas facere. Clem. Alexand. ii. Prædag. 12.

an alms-house is a greater work than to give an alms, and to erect a school than to teach a scholar; so to promote the settlement of the Gospel and a faithful ministry is the greatest of all, as tending to the good of many, even to their everlasting good. This is the pre-eminence of good books before a transient speech, that they may be a more durable help and benefit. Look before you with a judicious foresight; and as you must not do that present good to a particular person, which bringeth greater hurt to many; so you must not do that present good to one or many, which is like to produce a greater and more lasting hurt. Such blind reformers have misused the church, as ignorant physicians use their patients, who give them a little present ease, and cast them into greater misery, and seem to cure them with a dose of opium or the jesuit's powder, when they are bringing them into a worse disease than that which they pretend to cure. O when shall the poor church have wiser and foreseeing helpers!

Direct. XIII. 'Let all that you do for the churches' good be sure to tend to Holiness and Peace; and do nothing under the name of a good work, which hath an enmity to either of these.'—For these are to the church as life and health are to the body; and the increase of its welfare is nothing else but the increase of these. Whatever they pretend, believe none that say they seek the good and welfare of the church, if they seek not the promoting of holiness and peace: if they hinder the powerful preaching of the Gospel, and the means that tendeth to the saving of souls, and the serious, spiritual worshipping of God, and the unity and peace of all the faithful; and if they either divide the faithful into sects and parties, or worry all that differ from them, and humour them not in their conceits;—take all these for such benefactors to the church, as the wolf is to the flock, and as the plague is to the city, or the fever to the body, or the fire in the thatch is to the house. "The wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle," &c. But if ye have bitter envying, and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth: this wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish; for where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work." Jam. iii. 14—18.

Direct. XIV. 'If you will do the good which God accept-

eth, do that which he requireth ; and put not the name of good works upon your sins, nor upon unnecessary things of your own invention : nor think that any good must be accomplished by forbidden means.'—None know what pleaseth God so well as himself. Our ways may be right in our own eyes, and carnal wisdom may think it hath devised the fittest means to honour God, when he may abominate it, and say, Who required this at your hand ? And if we will do good by sinning, we must do it in despite of God, who is engaged against our sins and us. God needeth not our lie to his glory : if Papists think to find at the last day their popish ceremonies, and superstitions, and will-worship, their "touch not, taste not, handle not," to be reckoned to them as good works ; or if Jesuits or Enthusiasts think to find their perjury, treasons, rebellions, or conspiracies numbered with good works ; or the persecuting of the preachers and faithful professors of godliness to be good works ; how lamentably will they find their expectations disappointed !

Direct. xv. 'Keep in the way of your place and calling, and take not other men's works upon you without a call, under any pretence of doing good.'—Magistrates must do good in the place and work of magistrates ; and ministers in the place and work of ministers ; and private men in their private place and work ; and not one man step into another's place, and take his work out of his hand, and say, I can do it better : for if you should do it better, the disorder will do more harm than you did good by bettering his work. One judge must not step into another's court and seat, and say, I will pass more righteous judgment. You must not go into another man's school, and say, I can teach your scholars better ; nor into another's charge or pulpit, and say, I can preach better. The servant may not rule the master, because he can do it best ; no more than you may take another man's wife, or house, or lands, or goods, because you can use them better than he. Do the good that you are called to.

Direct. xvi. 'Where God hath prescribed you some particular good work or way of service, you must prefer that before another which is greater in itself.'—This is explicatory or limiting of *Direct. viii.* The reason is, because God knoweth best what is pleasing to him, and "obedience is

better than sacrifice." You must not neglect the necessary maintenance of wife and children, under pretence of doing a work of piety or greater good: because God hath prescribed you this order of your duty, that you begin at home (though not to stop there). Another minister may have a greater or more needy flock; but yet you must first do good in your own, and not step without a call into his charge. If God have called you to serve him in a low and mean employment, he will better accept you in that work than if you undertook the work of another man's place, to do him greater service.

Direct. xvii. 'Lose not your resolutions or opportunities of doing good by unnecessary delays.'—"Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it. Say not unto thy neighbour, Go, and come again, and to-morrow I will give; when thou hast it by thee^k."—"Boast not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth^l." It is two to one, but delay will take away thine opportunity, and raise such unexpected diversions or difficulties as will frustrate thine intent, and destroy the work. Take thy time, if thou wilt do thy service: it is beautiful in its season.

Direct. xviii. 'Yet present necessity may make a lesser work to be thy duty, when the greater may better bear delay.'—As to save a man's life in sickness or danger, when you may after have time to seek the saving of his soul. Not only works of mercy may be thus preferred before sacrifice, but the ordinary conveniences of our lives; as to rise, and dress us, and do other business, may go before prayer, when prayer may afterwards be done as well or better, and would be hindered if these did not go before.

Direct. xix. 'Though *'cæteris paribus'* the duties of the first table are to be preferred before those of the second, yet the greater duties of the second table must be preferred before the lesser duties of the first.'—The love of God is a greater duty than the love of man (and they must never be separated): but yet we must prefer the saving a man's life, or the quenching a fire in the town, before a prayer, or sacrament, or observation of a sabbath: David eat the shewbread, and the disciples of Christ rubbed out the corn on

^k Prov. iii. 27, 28.

^l Prov. xxvii. 1.

the sabbath-day, because the preserving of life was a greater duty than the observing of a sabbath, or a positive, ceremonial law. And Christ bids the Pharisees, “Go, learn what this meaneth,—I will have mercy, and not sacrifice:” the blood of our brethren is an unacceptable means of pleasing God, and maintaining piety, or promoting men’s several opinions in religion.

Direct. xx. ‘Choose that employment or calling (so far as you have your choice) in which you may be most serviceable to God.’—Choose not that in which you may be most rich or honourable in the world; but that in which you may do most good, and best escape sinning.

Quest. ‘But what if in one calling I am most serviceable to the church, but yet have most temptations to sin? And in another I have least temptations to sin, but am least serviceable to the church (which is the ordinary difference between men in public places and men in solitude), which of these should I choose?’

Answ. 1. Either you are already engaged in your calling, or not; if you are, you must have greater reasons to desert it than such as might require you at first not to choose it. 2. Either the temptations to sin are such as good men ordinarily overcome, or they are extraordinarily great. You may more warrantably avoid such great ones as you are not like to overcome than small or ordinary ones. 3. Either you are well furnished against these temptations, or not: if not, you must be more cautious in approaching them; but if you are, you may trust God the more boldly to help you out. 4. Either they are temptations to ordinary, human frailties in the manner of duty, or temptations to more dangerous sin: the first will not so much warrant you to avoid doing good for to escape them as the latter will. 5. The service that you are called to (being supposed great and necessary to be done by somebody) is either such as others will do better or as well if you avoid it, or not. If the church or common good receive no detriment by your refusal, you may the more insist on your own preservation: but if the necessities of the church or state, and the want of fitter instruments, or any apparent call of God, do single you out for that service, you must obey God whatever the difficulties and temptations are: for no temptations can necessitate you

to sin, and God that calleth you can easily preserve you ; but take heed what you thrust yourselves upon.

Quest. ‘ But may I change my calling for the service of the church, when the apostle bids every man abide in the calling in which he was called^m?’

Answ. The apostle only requireth men to make no unlawful change, (such as is the forsaking of a wife or husband) nor any unnecessary change as if it were necessary (as in the case of circumcision): but in the next words he saith, “ Art thou called being a servant? care not for it ; but if thou mayst be made free, use it rather.” He bids every man abide with God in the place he is called to, but forbids them not to change their state when they are called to change itⁿ. He speaks more of relations (of single persons and married, servants and free, &c.) than of trades or offices : and yet, no doubt, but a single person may be married, and the married must be separated ; and servants may be free. No man must take up or change any calling, without sufficient cause to call him to it ; but when he hath such cause, he sinneth if he change it not. The apostles changed their callings, when they became apostles ; and so did multitudes of the pastors of the church in every age. God no where forbids men to change their employment for the better, upon a sufficient cause or call.

Direct. XXI. ‘ Especially be sure that you live not out of a calling, that is, such a stated course of employment, in which you may best be serviceable to God.’—Disability indeed is an irresistible impediment. Otherwise no man must either live idly, or content himself with doing some little chars, as a recreation, or on the by : but every one that is able, must be statedly, and ordinarily employed in such work, as is serviceable to God, and the common good.

Quest. ‘ But will not wealth excuse us?’ *Answ.* It may excuse you from some sordid sort of work, by making you more serviceable in other : but you are no more excused from service and work of one kind or another, than the poorest man : unless you think that God requireth least where he giveth most. *Quest.* ‘ Will not age excuse us?’

Answ. Yes, so far as it disableth you ; but no further.

Object. ‘ But I am turned out of my calling.’ *Answ.* You are

^m 1 Cor. vii. 20.

ⁿ Ib. ver. 24.

not turned out of the service of God : he calleth you to that, or to another. Quest. ‘But may I not cast off the world, that I may only think of my salvation?’ Answ. You may cast off all such excess of worldly cares or business as unnecessarily hinder you in spiritual things : but you may not cast off all bodily employment and mental labour in which you may serve the common good. Every one that is a member of the church or commonwealth, must employ their parts to the utmost for the good of the church and commonwealth : public service is God’s greatest service. To neglect this, and say, I will pray and meditate, is as if your servant should refuse your greatest work, and tie himself to some lesser, easy part. And God hath commanded you some way or other to labour for your daily bread, and not to live as drones on the sweat of others only. Innocent Adam was put into the garden of Eden to dress it : and fallen man must “eat his bread in the sweat of his brow^o : and he that “will not work must be forbidden to eat^p.” And indeed it is necessary to ourselves, for the health of our bodies, which grow diseased with idleness ; and for the help of our souls, which will fail if the body fail : and man in flesh must have work for his body as well as for his soul. And he that will do nothing but pray and meditate, it is like will (by sickness or melancholy) be disabled ere long either to pray or meditate : unless he have a body extraordinary strong.

Direct. xxii. ‘Be very watchful redeemers of your time, and make conscience of every hour and minute, that you lose it not, but spend it in the best and most serviceable manner that you can.’—Of this I intend to speak more particularly anon ; and therefore shall here add no more.

Direct. xxiii. ‘Watchfully and resolutely avoid the entanglements and diverting occasions, by which the tempter will be still endeavouring to waste your time, and hinder you from your work.’—Know what is the principal service that you are called to, and avoid avocations : especially magistrates and ministers, and those that have great and public work must here take heed. For if you be not very wise and watchful, the tempter will draw you before you are aware, into such a multitude of diverting cares or businesses, that shall seem to be your duties, as shall make you almost

^o Gen. iii. 19.

^p 2 Thess. iii. 6, 10, 12.

unprofitable in the world. You shall have this or that little thing that must be done, and this or that friend that must be visited or spoken to, and this or that civility that must be performed ; so that trifles shall detain you from all considerable works. I confess friends must not be neglected, nor civilities be denied : but our greatest duties having the greatest necessity, all things must give place to them in their proper season. And therefore that you may avoid the offence of friends, avoid the place or occasions of such impediments : and where that cannot be done, whatever they judge of you, neglect not your most necessary work. Else it will be at the will of men and satan, whether you shall be serviceable to God or not.

Direct. xxiv. ‘ Ask yourselves seriously, how you would wish at death and judgment that you had used all your wit, and time, and wealth ; and resolve accordingly to use them now.’—This is an excellent direction and motive to you, for doing good and preventing the condemnation which will pass upon unprofitable servants. Ask yourselves, will it comfort me more at death or judgment, to think or hear, that I spent this hour in plays or idleness, or in doing good to myself or others ? How shall I wish then I had laid out my estate, and every part of it ? Reason itself condemneth him that will not now choose the course which then he shall wish that he had chosen, when we foresee the consequence of that day.

Direct. xxv. ‘ Understand how much you are beholden to God (and not he to you) in that he will employ you in doing any good : and how it is the way of your own receiving ; and know the excellency of your work and end, that you may do it all with love and pleasure.’—Unacquaintance with our master, and with the nature and tendency of our work, is it that maketh it seem tedious and unpleasant to us : and we shall never do it well, when we do it with an ill will, as merely forced. God loveth a cheerful servant ; that loveth his master and his work. It is the main policy of the devil to make our duty seem grievous, unprofitable and wearisome to us : for a little thing will stop him that goeth unwillingly and in continual pain.

Direct. xxvi. ‘ Expect your reward from God alone, and look for unthankfulness and abuse from men, or wonder not

if it befall you.'—If you are not the servants of men but of God, expect your recompence from him you serve. You serve not God indeed, if his reward alone will not content you, unless you have also man's reward. "Verily you have your reward," if with the hypocrite you work for man's approbation. Expect, especially if you are ministers or others that labour directly for the good of souls, that many prove your enemies for your telling them the truth, and that if you were as good as Paul and as unwearied in seeking men's salvation, yet the more you love, the less you will (by many) be loved: and those that he could have wished himself accursed from Christ to save, did hate him and persecute him, as if he had been the most accursed wretch: a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among the people, and one that turned the world upside down, were the names they gave him; and wherever he came, "bonds and imprisonment did attend him;" and slandering, and reviling, and whipping, and stocks, and vowing his death, are the thanks and requital which he hath from those, for whose salvation he spared no pains, but did spend and was spent. If you cannot do good upon such terms as these, and for those that will thus requite you, and be contented to expect a reward in heaven, you are not fit to follow Christ, who was worse used than all this, by those to whom he shewed more love than any of his servants have to shew. "Take up your cross, and do good to the unthankful, and bless them that curse you, and love them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you, if you will be the children of God^a."

Direct. xxvii. 'Make not your own judgments or consciences your law, or the maker of your duty; which is but the discerner of the law of God, and of the duty which he maketh you, and of your own obedience or disobedience to him.'—There is a dangerous error grown too common in the world, that a man is bound to do every thing, which his conscience telleth him is the will of God; and that every man must obey his conscience, as if it were the lawgiver of the world; whereas, indeed, it is not ourselves, but God that is our lawgiver. And conscience is not appointed or authorised, to make us any duty, which God hath not made us;

but only to discern the law of God, and call upon us to observe it: and an erring conscience is not to be obeyed, but to be better informed, and brought to a righter performance of its office.

In prosecution of this Direction, I shall here answer several cases about doubting.

Quest. 1. ‘What if I doubt whether a thing be a duty and good work, or not? must I do it while I doubt? Nay, what if I am uncertain whether it be duty or sin?’

Ans. 1. In all these cases about an erring or a doubting conscience, forget not to distinguish between the being of a duty, and the knowledge of a duty: and remember, that the first question is, Whether this be my duty? and the next, How may I discern it to be my duty? And that God giveth it the being by his law, and conscience is but to know and use it: and that God changeth not his law, and our duty, as often as our opinions change about it. The obligation of the law is still the same, though our consciences err in apprehending it otherwise. Therefore, if God command you a duty, and your opinion be that he doth not command it, or that he forbids it, and so, that it is no duty, or that it is a sin; it doth not follow, that indeed God commands it not, because you think so: else it were no error in you; nor could it be possible to err, if the thing become true, because you think it to be true. God commandeth you to love him, and to worship him, and to nourish your children, and to obey the higher powers, &c. And do you think you shall be discharged from all these duties, and allowed to be profane, or sensual, or to resist authority, or to famish your children, if you can but be blind enough to think that God would have it so? 2. Your error is a sin itself: and do you think that one sin must warrant another? or that sin can discharge you from your duty, and disannul the law? 3. You are a subject to God, and not a king to yourself: and therefore, you must obey his laws, and not make new ones.

Quest. 11. ‘But is it not every man’s duty to obey his conscience?’

Ans. No: it is no man’s duty to obey his conscience in an error, when it contradicteth the command of God. Conscience is but a discerner of God’s command, and not

at all to be obeyed strictly as a commander, but it is to be obeyed in a larger sense, that is, to be followed, wherever it truly discerneth the command of God. It is our duty to lay by our error, and seek the cure of it, till we attain it, and not to obey it.

Quest. III. ‘ But is it not a sin for a man to go against his conscience ?’

Answ. Yes : not because conscience hath any authority to make laws for you ; but because interpretatively you go against God. For you are bound to obey God in all things ; and when you think that God commandeth you a thing, and yet you will not do it, you disobey formally, though not materially. The matter of obedience is the thing commanded : the form of obedience is our doing the thing, because it is commanded ; when the authority of the commander causeth us to do it. Now you reject the authority of God, when you reject that which you think he commandeth, though he did not.

Quest. IV. ‘ Seeing the form of obedience is the being of it, and denominateth, which the matter doth not without the form, and there can be no sin which is not against the authority of God, which is the formal cause of obedience ; is it not then my duty to follow my conscience ?’

Answ. 1. There must be an integrity of causes, or concurrence of all necessities to make up obedience, though the want of any one will make a sin. If you will be called obedient, you must have the matter and form, because the true form is found in no other matter : you must do the thing commanded, because of his authority that commandeth it. If it may be called really and formally obedience, when you err, yet it is not that obedience which is acceptable : for it is not any kind of obedience, but obedience in the thing commanded, that God requireth. 2. But, indeed, as long as you err sinfully, you are also wanting in the form, as well as the matter of your obedience ; though you intend obedience in the particular act. It is not only a wilfully opposing and positive rejecting the authority of the commander, which is formal disobedience ; but it is any privation of due subjection to it ; when his authority is not so regarded as it ought to be ; and doth not so powerfully and effectually move us to our duty as it ought. Now this formal disobe-

dience is found in your erroneous conscience : for if God's authority had moved you as it should have done, to diligent inquiry and the use of all appointed means, and to the avoiding of all the causes of error, you had never erred about your duty. For if the error had been perfectly involuntary and blameless, the thing could not have been your particular duty, which you could not possibly come to know.

Quest. v. ' But if it be a sin to go against my conscience, must I not avoid that sin by obeying it? Would you have me sin ?'

Ans. You must avoid the sin, by changing your judgment, and not by obeying it : for that is but to avoid one sin by committing another. An erring judgment is neither obeyed nor disobeyed without sin : it can make you sin, though it cannot make you duty : it doth ensnare, though not oblige. If you follow it you break the law of God in doing that which he forbids you ; if you forsake it and go against it, you reject the authority of God, in doing that which you think he forbids you. So that there is no attaining to innocence any other way, but by coming first to know your duty, and then to do it. If you command your servant to weed your corn, and he mistake you, and verily think that you bid him pull up the corn, and not the weeds ; what now should he do? Shall he follow his judgment, or go against it? Neither ; but change it, and then follow it ; and to that end, inquire further of your mind till he be better informed : and no way else will serve the turn.

Quest. vi. ' Seeing no man that erreth, doth know or think that he erreth, (for that is a contradiction) how can I lay by that opinion, or strive against it, which I take to be the truth ?'

Ans. It is your sin, that you take a falsehood to be a truth. God hath appointed means for the cure of blindness and error as well as other sins ; or else the world were in a miserable case. Come into the light, with due self-suspicion, and impartiality, and diligently use all God's means, and avoid the causes of deceit and error ; and the light of truth will at once shew you the truth, and shew you that before you erred. In the mean time, sin will be sin though you take it to be duty, or no sin.

Quest. vii. ' But seeing he that knoweth his master's

will and doth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes; and he that knoweth it not, with few; is it not my duty chiefly to avoid the many stripes, by avoiding sinning against my conscience or knowledge?

Answ. 1. Your duty is to avoid both: and if both were not sinful, they would not both be punished with stripes. 2. Your conscience is not your knowledge when you err, but your ignorance. Conscience, as it signifieth the faculty of knowing, may be said to be conscience when it erreth; as reason is reason, in the faculty, when we err. And conscience, as to an erring act, may be called conscience, so far as there is any true knowledge in the act: (as a man is said to see, when he misjudgeth of colours, or to reason, when he argueth amiss.) But, so far as it erreth, it is no conscience in act at all: for conscience is science, and not nescience. You sin against your knowledge, when you sin against a well-informed conscience, but you sin in ignorance when you sin against an erring conscience. 3. And if the question be not, what is your duty, but which is the smaller sin, then it is true, that (*cæteris paribus*) it is a greater sin to go against your judgments, than to follow it. But yet, other imparities in matter and circumstances, may be an exception against this rule.

Quest. VIII. ‘But it is not possible for every man presently to know all his duty, and to avoid all error about his duty. Knowledge must be got in time. All men are ignorant in many things: should I not then in the mean time follow my conscience?’

Answ. 1. Your ignorance is culpable, or not culpable. If it be not culpable, the thing which you are ignorant of is not your duty. If culpable (which is the case supposed), as you brought yourself to that difficulty of knowing, so it will remain your sin till it be cured; and one sin will not warrant another. And all that time you are under a double command, the one is to know, and use the means of knowledge; and the other is to do the thing commanded. So that how long soever you remain in error, you remain in sin, and are not under an obligation to follow your error, but first to know, and then to do the contrary duty. 2. And as long as you keep yourselves in a necessity, or way of sinning, you must call it sin as it is, and not call it duty. It is

not your duty to choose a lesser sin before a greater; but to refuse and avoid both the lesser and the greater. And if you say, 'you cannot,' yet, remember, that it is only your sin that is your impotency, or, your impotency is sinful. But it is true, that you are most obliged to avoid the greatest sin: therefore, all that remaineth in the resolving all such cases, is but to know, of two sins, which is the greatest.

Quest. ix. 'What, if there be a great duty, which I cannot perform, without committing a little sin? Or, a very great good, which I cannot do, but by an unlawful means? As, to save the lives of many by a lie.'

Ans. 1. It is no duty to you, when you cannot do it without wilful sin, be it never so little. Deliberately to choose a sin, that I may perform some service to God, or do some good to others, is to run before we are called, and to make work for ourselves, which God never made for us; and to offer sin for a sacrifice to God; and to do evil that good may come of it; and abuse God, and reject his government, under pretence of serving him. "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord: how much more when he bringeth it with a wicked mind?" "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination." "Be more ready to hear, than to offer the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil." 2. If you will do good by sinning, you must do good in opposition to God: and how easily can he disappoint you, and turn it into evil! It is not good indeed, which must be accomplished by sin. The final good is never promoted by it: and all other good is to be estimated by its tendency to the end. You think that good which is not so, because you judge by the present feeling of your flesh, and do not foresee how it stands related to the everlasting good.

Quest. x. 'Seeing then that I am sure beforehand that I cannot preach, or hear, or pray, or do any good action without sin, must I not, by this rule, forbear them all?'

Ans. No: because your infirmities in the performance of your duty, which you would avoid and cannot, are not made the condition of your action, but are the diseases of it.

^r *Prov. xxi. 27. xv. 8.*

^s *Prov. xxviii. 9.*

^t *Eccles. v. 1.*

They are not chosen and approved of. The duty is your duty notwithstanding your infirmities, and may be accepted of: for you cannot serve God in perfection till you are perfect: and to cast away his service, is a far greater sin, than to do it imperfectly. But you may serve him without such wilful, chosen sin, if not in one way, yet in another. The imperfection of your service is repented of while it is committed; but so is not your approved, chosen sin. For a man to make a bargain against God, that he will commit a sin against him, though the action be the same which he hath often done before in pardonable weakness; this is to turn it to a presumptuous, heinous sin. If he do it for worldly gain or safety, he selleth his obedience to God for trifles. If he do it to serve God by, he blasphemeth God; declaring him to be evil, and a lover of sin, or so impotent as not to be able to do good, or attain his ends by lawful means. It is most dangerous to give it under our hands to the devil, that we will sin, on what pretence soever.

Quest. xi. ‘What, if I am certain that the duty is great, and uncertain whether the thing annexed to it be a sin or not? Must I forbear a certain duty for an uncertain sin? Or forbear doing a great and certain good, for fear of a small, uncertain evil?’

Ans. 1. The question ‘de esse’ must go before the question ‘de apparere.’ Either that which you say you are uncertain of, is indeed a sin, or it is none. If it be no sin, then you are bound both to search till you know that it is no sin, and not to forbear your duty for it. But if really it be a sin, then your uncertainty of it is another sin: and that which God bindeth you to, is to forsake them both. 2. Your question containeth a contradiction: you cannot be certain that it is a duty at all to you, any further than you are certain whether the condition or means be lawful or a sin. What, if an auditor in Spain or Italy say, ‘I am certain that it is a duty to obey my teachers; but I am uncertain whether their doctrines of the mass, purgatory, and the rest, have any untruth or sin in them; therefore, I must not forbear certain obedience for uncertain sin.’ Or if a priest among them say, ‘I am certain that it is a duty to preach God’s word, but I am not certain that the Trent Articles which I must swear or subscribe, are sinful or false; there-

fore I must not leave a great and certain duty for an uncertain sin.' The answer to them both is easy. 1. It is your sin that you are uncertain of the sinfulness of those things, which God hath forbidden: and God biddeth you first to search the Scriptures, and cure that error. He made his law before your doubts arose, and will not change it because you doubt. 2. You contradict yourselves by a mistake. You have no more certainty that you should obey your teachers in these particulars, than you have that the things which they teach or command you, are not against that law of God. You are certain that you must obey them in all things not forbidden by God, and within the reach of their office to require. And you are as certain that it is unlawful to obey them against the law of God, and that God must be obeyed before man. But whether you must obey them in this particular case, you cannot be certain, while you are uncertain whether it be forbidden of God. And the priest must be as uncertain whether it be any duty of his at all, to preach God's word, as he is uncertain of the lawfulness of the Trent oath or subscription, unless he can do it without. If a subject say, 'I am certain, that to govern the kingdom well, is a great, good work and duty, but I am uncertain whether to depose the king if he govern not well, and set up myself, be a sin; therefore, the certain good must overrule the uncertain evil.' I give him the same answer, 1. It is your sin to be uncertain whether rebellion be a sin: and God bindeth you to lay by the sin of your judgment, and not to make it a shoeing-horn to more. 2. You are sure that governing well is a good work; but you should be as sure, that it is no duty of yours, nor good work for you to do, as you are sure that you are but a private man and a subject, and never called to do the good of another's office. A private man may say, 'I am sure preaching is a good work; but I am not sure that a private, unordained man may not stately separate himself to do it.' But he can be no surer that it is a duty to him, than he is that he is called to it.

Quest. XII. 'Well, suppose my ignorance be my sin, and suppose that I am equally uncertain of the duty, and of the sin annexed; yet, if I have done all that I am able, and re-

main still unresolved, and after my most diligent inquiry, am as much in doubt as ever, what should I then do?"

Answ. 1. If you had, by any former sin, so forfeited God's assistance, as that he will leave you to your blindness, this altereth not his law and your obligations, which are still the same (to learn, understand, and practise). 2. But if you are truly willing to understand, and practise, and use his means, you have no cause to imagine that he will thus forsake you: undoubtedly he appointeth you no means in vain. If you attain not sufficient resolution to guide you in your duty, it is either because your hearts are false in the inquiry, and biassed, or unwilling to know the truth, or do it; or because you use not the true appointed means for resolution, but in partiality or laziness, neglect it.

Quest. XIII. 'Suppose still my ignorance be my sin, which is the greater sin, to neglect the good work, or to venture on the feared evil that is annexed? I am not conscious of any unfaithfulness, but human frailty, that keepeth me from certainty. And no man is so perfect as to have no culpable ignorance, and to be certain in every point of duty. Therefore I must with greatest caution avoid the greatest sin, when I am out of hope of avoiding all. On one side, it is a common rule that I must do nothing against conscience (no, not a doubting conscience), though I must not always do what it biddeth me. "For he that doubteth is condemned if he eat: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin." On the other side, if all duty be omitted which conscience doubteth of, I may be kept from almost every duty.'

Answ. The heart is so deceitful that you have great cause to watch, lest human frailty be pretended, for that error, which a corrupted, biassed, partial mind, or wilful laziness is the cause of. Diligent study, and inquiry, and prayer, with a sincere desire to know the truth, may succeed, at least, to so much satisfaction, as may keep your minds in quietness and peace, and give you comfort in your way, and preserve you from all such sin as is inconsistent with this your safety and acceptance with God. But yet it is true that human frailty will occasion in the best, uncertainties in some particular cases; and though God make it *not our duty* of two sins to choose the less, but to refuse

both, yet he maketh it our duty more diligently to avoid the greater than the less. And oftentimes the case is so sudden, that no inquiry can be made. And therefore I confess, a Christian should know which sins are greatest and to be most avoided. At present I shall lay down these following rules, premising this, that where accidents and circumstances, which make sins great or small, are to be compared, they are oftentimes so numerous and various, that no rules can be laid down beforehand, that will serve all turns, no more than in law and physic, any law-books or physic-books will serve all cases, without a present, experienced, judicious counsellor. Present Prudence and Sincerity must do most.

Rule I. ‘In things altogether indifferent, nothing must be done that conscience doubteth of, because there is a possibility or fear of sinning on the one side, but none on the other: and in that case, it is a certain sin to venture on a feared sin.’ But then, it is supposed that the thing be indifferent, as clothed with all its circumstances, and that there be no accident that taketh away its indifferency.

Rule II. ‘In case the thing be really unlawful, and I think it to be lawful, but with some doubting, but am clear that the forbearing of it is no sin; there the sin is only in the doing it:’ because all is clear and safe on the other side.

Rule III. ‘There are many sins which are always, and to all persons, in all cases, sins; and not doubted of by any, without gross unfaithfulness or negligence; and here there is no room for any doubting, whether we must do that good which cannot be done without that sin; it being certain that no such good can be a duty.’ As, to commit idolatry; to blaspheme God; to deny Christ; to deny the Scriptures; to hate, or reproach, or oppose a holy life; to be perjured; to approve, or justify the sin of others, &c. It can be no duty which cannot be done without the wilful yielding to, or committing these, or any known sin.

Rule IV. ‘There are some duties so great, and clear, and constant to all, that none but a profligate or graceless conscience (or one that is fearfully poisoned with sin), can make a doubt of it deliberately.’ These, therefore, come *not within the case before us.*

Rule v. ‘ If moral evil be compared only with natural good, or moral good with natural evil, there is no doubt to be made of the case: the least sin having more evil in it than the prosperity or lives of millions of men have good (considered in themselves as natural good): and the least duty to God having more good in it than the death of millions of men (as such) hath evil.’ For the good of duty and the evil of sin are greatened by their respect to God, and the other lessened as being good or evil only unto men, and with respect to them.

Rule vi. ‘ Where I am in an equal degree uncertain of the duty to be omitted, and of the sin to be committed, it is a greater sin to venture doubtfully upon the committing of a positive sin that is great (in case it prove a sin), than upon the omitting a duty which (in case it prove a duty) is less; and on the contrary, it is worse to venture on the omitting of a great duty, than on the committing of a small, positive sin.’ As suppose my own or my neighbour’s house be on fire, and I am in doubt whether I may take another man’s water to quench it against his will: or if my own, or my child’s, or neighbour’s life be in danger by famine, and I doubt whether I may take another man’s apples, or pears, or ears of corn, or his bread, against his will, to save my own life or another’s. Really, the thing is already made lawful or unlawful (which I now determine not) by the law of God; but in my unavoidable uncertainty (if I be equally doubtful on both sides), it is a far greater sin (if it prove a sin) to omit the saving of the house or life than to take another man’s water, or fruit, or bread, that hath plenty (if this prove the sin). So if king and nobles were in a ship, which would be taken and all destroyed by pirates, unless I told a lie, and said, they are other persons; if I were equally in doubt which course to take, to lie or not (though sin have more evil than all our lives have good), yet a sinful omitting to save all their lives is a greater sin than a sinful telling of such a lie. Suppose I am in doubt, whether I may lawfully save an ox, or ass, or a man’s life, by labour on the sabbath-day? or David had doubted, whether he might eat the consecrated shew-bread in his necessity? it is clear, that the sinful neglect of a man’s life is worse than the sinful violation of a sabbath, or the sinful use of

the consecrated bread. If I equally doubt, whether I may use a ceremony, or disorderly, defective form of prayer, and whether I should preach the Gospel to save men's souls, where there are not others enough to do it; it is clear, that sinfully to use a ceremony, or disorderly form of prayer, is 'cæteris paribus' a lesser sin than sinfully to neglect to preach the Gospel and to save men's souls. On the other side, suppose I dwelt in Italy, and could not have leave to preach the Gospel there, unless I would subscribe to the Trent confession, or the canon 3d of Concil. Lateran sub Innocent III., one of which requireth men to swear for transubstantiation, and to interpret the Scriptures only according to the unanimous consent of the fathers (who never unanimously consented to any exposition of the greatest part of the Scriptures at all), the other decreeth the pope's deposing temporal lords, and disobliging their subjects from their allegiance? On the one side, I doubt whether by subscribing I become not guilty of justifying idolatry, perjury, and rebellion, and making myself guilty of the perjury of many thousand others: on the other side, I doubt, whether I may disobey my superiors who command me this subscription, and may forbear preaching the Gospel, when yet I apprehend that there are others to preach it, and that my worth is not so considerable as that there should be any great loss in putting me out and putting in another, and God needeth not me to do him service, but hath instruments at command, and that I know not how soon he may restore my liberty, or that I may serve him in another country, or else in sufferings at home, in such a case the sinful justifying of perjury or rebellion in whole countries is a far greater sin than the sinful omission of my preaching: for he that justifieth perjury destroyeth the bonds of all societies, and turneth loose the subjects against their sovereigns. Or if I, being a minister, were forbidden to preach the Gospel where there is necessity, unless I will commit some sin; if I doubt on one side whether I should disobey my superiors, and on the other whether I should forbear my calling, and neglect the souls of sinners; it is a lesser sin 'cæteris paribus' to disobey a man sinfully, than to disobey God, and to be cruel to the souls of men to their perdition sinfully. Or if I have made a vow, and sworn that I will cast away a

penny or a shilling, and I am in doubt on one side whether I be not bound to keep it as a vow, and on the other whether it be not a sin to keep it, because to cast away any of my talents is a sin, in this case, the sinful casting away of a penny or a shilling is not so great a sin as sinful perjury. If Daniel and the three witnesses had been in equal doubt, whether they should obey the king or pray to God (as Dan. vi.), and renounce the bowing to his idol (Dan. iii.), the sinful forbearance of prayer as then commanded, and the sinful bowing to the idol, had been a greater sin than a sinful disobeying the king's command in such a case, if they had been mistaken.

Rule VII. ' If I cannot discern whether the duty to be omitted, or the sin to be committed be materially and in other respects the greater, then that will be to me the greater of the sins which my doubting conscience doth most strongly suspect to be sin, in its most impartial deliberation.' For if other things be equal, certainly the sinning against more or less conviction or doubting must make an inequality. As if I could not discern whether my subscription to the Trent confession, or my forbearing to preach, or my preaching though prohibited, were the greater sin, in case they were all sinful; but yet I am most strongly suspicious of sinfulness in the subscription, and less suspicious of sinfulness in my forbearing in such a case to preach, and least of all suspicious of sinfulness in my preaching though prohibited: in this case to subscribe sinfully is the greatest sin, and to forbear sinfully to exercise my office is the next, and to preach unwarrantably is the least.

Rule VIII. ' If I could perceive no difference in the degrees of evil in the omission and the commission, nor yet in the degrees of my suspicion or doubting, then that is the greater sin which I had greater helps and evidence to have known, and did not.'

Rule IX. ' If both greater material evil be on one side than the other, and greater suspicion or evidence of the sinfulness also, then that must needs be the greater sin '

Rule X. ' If the greatness of the material evil be on one side, and the greatness of the suspicion and evidence be on the other, then the former (if sin) will be materially and in itself considered the worst; but the latter will be formally

the greater disobedience to God.' But the comparison will be very difficult. As suppose, that I swear to God that I will cast away a shilling, or that I will forbear to pray for a week together; here I take perjury to be a greater sin than my casting away a shilling, or forbearing to pray a week: but when I question whether the oath should be kept or not, I have greater suspicion that it should not than it should, because no oath must be the bond of the least iniquity. Here, if the not keeping it prove a sin, I shall do that which is the greater sin in itself if I keep it not; but I shall shew more disobedience in keeping it, if it be not to be kept.

Rule XI. 'If it be a doubtful sin that I suspect on one side, and but a single one on the other, it maketh an inequality in the case.' As suppose that in my father's family there are heretics and drunkards, and I swear that in my place and calling I will endeavour to cast them out. My mother approveth my vow; my father is against it, and dischargeth me of it because I did it not by his advice. On one side, I doubt whether I am bound, or may act against my father's will: on the other side, I as much doubt whether I am not perjured, and disobedient to my mother if I do it not, and whether I disobey not God, that made it my duty to endeavour the thing in my place and calling before I vowed it.

Rule XII. 'There is a great deal of difference between omitting the substance of a duty for ever, and the delaying it, or altering the time, and place, and manner.' For instance, that which will justify or excuse me for shortening my prayer, or for praying but once a day, or at noon rather than in the morning, or for defect in method, or fervency, or expressions, may not justify or excuse me for denying, renouncing, or long forbearing prayer. And that which may excuse an apostle for not preaching in the temple or synagogues, or not having the emperor's or the high-priest's allowance or consent, or for not continuing in one city or country, would not excuse them if they had renounced their callings, or totally as to all times, and places, and manner of performance, have ceased their work for fear of men.

Rule XIII. 'If the duty to be omitted, and the sin to be committed, seem equal in greatness, and our doubt be equal

as to both, it is commonly held safer to avoid the commission more studiously than the omission.' For which there are many reasons given.

Rule xiv. 'There is usually much more matter for fear and suspicion 'cæteris paribus' of sins to be committed than of duties to be omitted, when the commission is made necessary to the doing of the duty.' Both because it is there that the fear beginneth: for I am certain that the good work is no duty to me, if the act be a sin which is its necessary condition. Therefore so far as I suspect the act to be sinful, I must needs suspect the duty to be no duty to me at that time. It is not possible I should be rationally more persuaded that the duty is my duty, than that the condition is no sin; if it were the saving of the lives of all the men in the country, I could no further take it to be my duty, than I take that to be no sin by which it must be done; it being a thing past controversy, that we must not sin for the accomplishment of any good whatsoever. And also because the sin is supposed to be always sin; but few duties are at all times duties: and the sin is a sin to every man, but the duty may be another man's duty and not mine. For instance, Charles V. imposeth the Interim upon Germany: some pastors yielded to it; others refused it, and were cast out. Those that yielded, pleaded the good of the churches, and the prevention of their utter desolation; but yet confessed that if the thing imposed were sinful, it was not their duty to do it for any good whatsoever, but to seek the good of the church as well as they could without it: the other that were cast out, argued, that so far as they were confident the Interim was sinful, they must be confident that nothing was their duty that could not be done without it; and that God knew best what is good for his church, and there is no accomplishing its good by sin and God's displeasure; and that they did not therefore forsake their ministry, but only lose the ruler's licence, for they resolved to preach in one place or other till they were imprisoned, and God can serve himself by their imprisonment or death as well as by their preaching. And while others took their places that thought the Interim lawful, the churches were not wholly destitute; and if God saw meet, he could restore
eir fuller liberties again: in the mean time, to serve him

as all pastors did for three hundred years after Christ (without the licence of the civil magistrate) was not to cast away their office. Another instance : the zealous Papists, in the reign of Henry III. in France, thought that there was a necessity of entering the League, and warring against the king, because religion was in danger, the preservation whereof is an unquestionable duty. The learned and moderate lawyers that were against them, said, that there being no question but the king had the total sovereignty over them, they were sure it was a sin to resist the higher powers, and therefore no preservation of religion could be a duty, or lawful to them, which must be done by such a certain sin : sin is not the means to save religion or the commonwealth.

Rule xv. ‘ When a thing is not prohibited and sinful, simply in itself, but because of some accidental, or consequential evil that it tendeth to, there a greater accidental or consequential good, may preponderate the evil, and make the thing become no sin, but a duty.’ It is a matter of exceeding difficulty to discern oftentimes, whether a thing be simply and absolutely forbidden, or only by accident, and alterably ; and to discern which accident doth preponderate. There are so many observations that should here be taken in, and so much of a man’s life and peace is concerned in it, that it deserveth a treatise by itself. And therefore, I shall not meddle with it any further here, lest an insufficient tractate be worse than none, in a case where error is so easy and perilous.

Rule xvi. ‘ As to the danger of the sinner himself, there is a great deal of difference between an error and sin of human frailty, when the service of God, and true obedience, and the common good, are sincerely intended ; and an error and sin of false-heartedness and sloth, when selfishness is the secret spring of the error, and carnal interest the real end, though God and his service be pretended.’ And usually, the concomitants will shew something of this to others. For instance ; two magistrates and two ministers submit to some questioned imposition ; all pretend that the glory of God, and his service, is it that prevaieth with them to submit. The one of the magistrates faithfully serveth God afterward with his authority, and sheweth thereby that he

meant sincerely: the other doth no good in his place, and sheweth his hypocrisy. One of the ministers preacheth zealously, and privately laboureth as one that thirsteth for the saving of souls: the other preacheth formally, and coldly, and heartlessly, and never converteth a soul, and neglecteth the work which he pretended was his end.

Grand Direct. xi. 'Let it be most deeply engraven on thy heart, that God is infinitely good, and amiable: thy grand benefactor and father in Christ; the end of all thou art and hast; and the everlasting rest and happiness of thy soul: see therefore that thy inflamed heart be entirely and absolutely offered up unto him by the mediation of his Son, to love him, to trust him, to delight in him, to be thankful to him, to glorify him, and through faith to long for the heavenly glory, where all this will be perfectly done for ever. And first let us speak of LOVE.'

I did in the first Direction persuade you to lay a good foundation in faith and knowledge. In the second, I directed you how to live upon Christ. In the third, how to believe practically in the Holy Ghost. In the fourth, I directed you to the orderly and practical knowledge of the attributes of God. In the fifth, how to know God practically in his first grand relation, as he is your owner. In the sixth, how to know him practically in his second grand relation, as he is your king and governor; and in subordination to his governing relation. In the seventh, I directed you in your relation of disciples to Christ your teacher. And in the eighth, I directed you in your relation of patients to Christ your physician, and the Holy Ghost as your sanctifier. In the ninth, I directed you in your relation of soldiers to Christ the captain of your salvation. In the tenth, I directed you in the relation of servants to Christ your master. And now being past those subordinate relations (to the second), I proceed to direct you in your third grand relation to God as your Benefactor, Father, and Felicity. And because there are divers great duties in this General, I shall first begin with this of Love: and afterwards speak distinctly of the rest.

Directions for loving God as our Father and Felicity.

Here I shall first give you these general preparatives, (and then give you Directions for the exercise of holy love.)

1. You must understand the Nature of love to God. 2. You must understand the Differences of this love. 3. You must understand the Reasons of it. 4. And the Contraries of it. 5. And the Counterfeits of it.

I. For the understanding of its Nature observe these things : 1. It is not the love of a particular good, but of the infinite, Universal Good. The creature is a particular good, and our love to it is a particular, limited love, confined as to a point. God is the universal good ; and our love to him is not limited by the object, but by the narrowness and imperfection of our faculties themselves. As suppose you had variety of candles in your room, and you had diamonds, and other refulgent things ; you love each of these with a particular love, for their splendour and usefulness ; and you more easily observe and feel the motion of this confined love. But light itself, as light, you love with a more universal love : which is greater, but not so sensibly observed, (Not as we speak of notional universals in logic, which have no existence but in particulars ; but of the natural, transcendent, infinite good, eternally existent, and arbitrarily appearing in some created particles.) As the love of an infinite light would differ from the love of a candle ; and the love of an infinite heat, from the love of a fire ; and the love of infinite wisdom itself, from the love of a wise man ; and the love of infinite goodness itself, from the love of a good man ; so doth the love of God, from the love of a particular, created good.

2. Our love to God is not ordinarily so passionate, as our love to creatures : because the nearness and sensibleness of the creature, promoteth such sensible operations : but God is not seen, or felt, or heard, but believed in by faith, and known by reason. And the narrowness of the creature making resistances, stops, and difficulties, occasioneth a turbulent passionateness of love ; when the infiniteness of God hath no such occasion. Our love to creatures is like the running of a stream, in a channel that is

too narrow for it, where stops and banks do make it go on with a roaring violence: but our love to God is like the brook that slideth into the ocean, where it is insensibly devoured. Therefore our love to God must principally be perceived, not in violent passions, but in 1. A high estimation of him. 2. In the will's adhering to him. 3. And in the effects (to be mentioned anon). Yet when a passionate love is added to these, it may be the most excellent significantly and effectively. Some philosophers think that God cannot at all be loved with a passionate love, because he is a pure, immaterial being, and therefore, cannot be the object of a material act or motion, such as our passions are: and therefore, that it is some idol of the imagination that is so loved. But, 1. If they mean that his pure essence, in itself, is not the immediate object of a passion, they may say the same of the will itself: for man (at least in flesh,) can have no other volition of God, but as he is apprehended by the intellect. And if by an idol, they mean the image of God in the mind, gathered from the appearances of God in creatures, man in flesh hath no other knowledge of him: for here we know him but darkly, enigmatically, and as in a glass, and have no formal, proper conception of him in his essence. So that the rational powers themselves, do no otherwise know and will God's essence, but as represented to us in a glass. 2. And thus we may also love him passionately; it being God in his objective being, as apprehended by the intellect, that we both will and passionately love. The motion of the soul in flesh, may raise passions, by the instrumentality of the corporeal spirits, towards an immaterial object: which is called the object of those passions, not merely as the passions of a rational agent; it being more nearly or primarily the object of the intellect and will, and then of the passions, as first apprehended by these superior powers. A man may delight in God; or else, how is he our felicity? and yet, we know of no delight which is not passion. A man may love his own soul with a passionate love; and yet it is immaterial. When I passionately love my friend, it is his immaterial soul, and his wisdom, and holiness, which I chiefly love.

3. It is not only for his excellencies and perfections in himself, nor only for his love and benefit to us, that grace

doth cause a sinner to love God ; but it is for both conjunctly : as he is good, and doth good, especially to us, in the greatest things.

4. Our first special love to God, is orderly and rationally to be raised, by the belief of his goodness in himself, and his common love and mercy to sinners, manifested in his giving of his Son for the world, and giving men the conditional promise of pardon and salvation, and offering them Christ and life eternal ; and all this to us as well as others : and not to be caused by the belief or persuasion of his special, peculiar, electing, redeeming, or saving love, to us above others, that have the same invitations and offers. It is the knowledge of common love and mercy, and not of special love and mercy to us, as already possessed, that is appointed to be the motive of our first special love to God. (Yet there is in it, an apprehension that he is our only possible felicity, and that he will give us a special interest in his favour, if we return by faith in Christ unto him.) For, 1. Every man is bound to love God with a special love ; but every man is not specially beloved by him : and no man is bound to love God, as one that specially loveth him, but those that indeed are so beloved by him : for else they were bound to believe a falsehood, and to love that which is not ; and grace should be an error and deceit. The object is before the act. God's special love must in itself be before its revelation ; and, as revealed, it must go before our belief of it : and, as believed, it must go before our loving it, or loving him as such, or for it. 2. The first saving faith is inseparably conjunct with special love. For Christ is believed in and willed, as the way or means to God as the end : (otherwise it is no true faith.) And the volition of the end (which is love), is in order of nature before the choice or use of the means, as such. And if we must love God as one that specially loveth us, in our first love, then we must believe in him as such, by our first faith : and if so, it must be to us a revealed truth. But (as it is false to most that are bound to believe, so) it is not revealed to the elect themselves : for if it be, it is either by ordinary or extraordinary revelation : if by ordinary, either by Scripture directly, or by evidences in ourselves, which Scripture maketh the characters of his love. But neither of these : for Scripture pro-

miseth not salvation to named, but described persons : and evidence of special love there is none, before faith and repentance, and the first love to God. And extraordinary revelation from heaven, by inspiration or angel, is not the ordinary begetter of faith : for faith is the belief of God speaking to us (now) by his written word. So that where there is no object of love, there can be no love : and where there is no revelation of it to the understanding, there is no object for the will : and till a man first believe and love God, he hath no revelation that God doth specially love him. Search as long as you will, you will find no other. 3. If the wicked were condemned for not loving a false or feigned object, it would quiet their consciences in hell, when they had detected the deceit, and seen the natural impossibility and contradiction. 4. The first love to God is more a love of desire, than of possession : and therefore, it may suffice to raise it, that we see a possibility of being for ever happy in God, and enjoying him in special love, though yet we know not that we possess any such love. The nature of the thing proclaimeth it most rational and due, that we love the Infinite Good, that hath done so much, by the death of his Son, to remove the impediments of our salvation, and is so far reconciled to the world in his death, as by a message of reconciliation, to entreat them to accept of Christ, and pardon, and salvation freely offered them, and is himself the offered happiness of the soul. He that dare say that this much hath not an objective sufficiency to engage the soul in special love, is a blind under-valuer of wonderful mercy. 5. The first special grace bringeth no new object for faith or love, but causeth a new act upon the formerly revealed object.

5. But our love to God is greatly increased and advantaged afterwards, by the assurance or persuasion of his peculiar, special love to us. And therefore, all Christians should greatly value such assurance, as the appointed means of advancing them to greater love to God.

6. As we know God here in the glass of his Son, and word, and creatures, so we most sensibly love him here, as his goodness appeareth in his works, and graces, and his Word, and Son.

7. The nearer we come to perfection, the more we shall

love God for himself and his infinite natural goodness and perfections ; not casting away the respects of his goodness and love as to ourselves ; but highest regarding himself for himself, as carried to him above ourselves.

II. Though love, in its own nature, be still the same ; and is nothing but the rational appetite of good : or the will's volition of good apprehended by the understanding ; the first motion of the will to good, arising from that natural inclination to good which is the nature of the will, and the ' *pondus animæ*, ' the poise of the soul ; or from healing grace which repairerth the breach that is made in nature ; yet love in regard of the state of the lover, and the way of its impetrate acting, is thus differenced. 1. Either the lover is in the hopeful pursuit of the thing beloved : and then it is Desiring, Seeking Love. 2. Or he is, or seemeth to be denied, destitute, and deprived of his beloved (in whole, or in part) : and then it is Mourning, Lamenting Love. 3. Or he enjoyeth his beloved : and then it is Enjoying, Delighting Love. 1. The ordinary love which grace causeth on earth, is a predominancy of seeking, desiring love, encouraged by some little foretastes of enjoying, delighting love, and, in a great measure, attended with mourning, lamenting love. 2. The state of deserted, dark, declining, relapsing, and melancholy, tempted Christians, is, a predominance of mourning, lamenting love, assisted with some help of seeking, desiring love ; but destitute of enjoying, delighting love. 3. The state of the glorified is perfection of enjoying, delighting love alone. And all the rest are to bring us unto this^{*}.

III. The Reasons why love to God is so great, and high, and necessary a thing, and so much esteemed above other graces, are : 1. It is the motion of the soul that tendeth to the end ; and the end is more excellent than all the means as such. 2. The love, or will, or heart is the man ; where the heart or love is, there the man is : it is the fullest re-

^{*} Nobilius et præstantius est charitatem exercere in Deo, quam virtutes propter Deum. Charitas compendiosissima ad Deum via est per quam celerrime in Deum pervenitur ; nec sine charitate aliqua virtus supernaturaliter homini sapit : charitas enim forma omnium virtutum est. Per hoc charitatis exercitium, homo ad tantam sui abominationem venit, ut non solum seipsum contemnat, verum etiam se ab aliis contemni æquo animo ferat ; imo etiam ab aliis contemptus gaudeat. — Thaulerus, flor. c. 7. p. 114.

signation of the whole man to God, to love him as God, or offer him the heart. God never hath his own fully till we love him. Love is the grand, significant, vital motion of the soul; such as the heart, or will, or love is, such you may boldly call the man. 3. The love of God is the perfection and highest improvement of all the faculties of the soul, and the end of all other graces, to which they tend, and to which they grow up, and in which they terminate their operations. 4. The love of God is that spirit or life of moral excellency in all other graces in which (though not their form, yet) their acceptableness doth consist, without which they are to God as a lifeless carrion is to us. And to prove any action sincere and acceptable to God, is to prove that it comes from a willing, loving mind, without which you can never prove it. 5. Love is the commander of the soul; and therefore God knoweth that if he have our hearts he hath all, for all the rest are at his command; for it is, as it were, the nature of the will, which is the commanding faculty, and its object is the ultimate end which is the commanding object. Love setteth the mind on thinking, the tongue on speaking, the hands on working, the feet on going, and every faculty obeyeth its command. 6. The obedience which love commandeth participateth of its nature, and is a ready, cheerful, sweet obedience, acceptable to God, and pleasant to ourselves. 7. Love is a pure, chaste, and cleansing grace; and most powerfully casteth out all creature pollution from the soul: the love of God doth quench all carnal, sinful love; and most effectually carrieth up the soul to such high delights, as causeth it to contemn and forget the toys which it before admired. 8. The love of God is the true acknowledging and honouring him as good. That blessed attribute, his Goodness, is denied or despised by those who love him not. The light of the sun would not be valued, honoured, or used by the world, if there were no eyes in the world to see it: and the goodness of God is to them that love him not, as the light to them that have no eyes. If God would have had his goodness to be thus unknown or neglected, he would never have made the intellectual creatures. Those only give him the glory of his goodness, that truly love him. 9. Love (in its attainment) is the enjoying and delighting grace: it is the

very content and felicity of the soul, both as it maketh us capable to receive the most delightful communications of God's love to us, and as it is the soul's delightful closure with its most amiable, felicitating object. 10. Love is the everlasting grace, and the work which we must be doing in heaven for ever. These are the reasons of love's pre-eminence^y.

IV. The love of creatures hath its Contraries on both extremes, in the excess and in the defect; but the love of God hath no contrary in excess: for Infinite Goodness cannot possibly be loved too much (unless as the passion may possibly be raised to a degree distracting or disturbing the brain). The odious vices contrary to the love of God are, 1. Privative; not loving him. 2. Positive; hating him. 3. Opposite; loving his creatures in his stead: all these concur in every unsanctified soul. That they are all void of the true love of God, and taken up with creature love, is past all doubt; but whether they are all haters of God, may seem more questionable. But it is as certain as the other; only the hatred of God in most doth not break out into that open opposition, persecution, or blasphemy, as it doth with some that are given up to desperate wickedness; nor do they think that they hate him. But the aversation of the will is the hatred of God; and if men had not a great aversation to him, they would not forsake him, and refuse to be converted to him, notwithstanding all the arguments of love that can be used to allure them. Displacency, nolition, and aversation are hatred.

If you think it impossible, that men can hate God, whom they confess to be infinitely good, consider for the true understanding of this hatred, 1. That it is not as good that they hate him; 2. and it is not God simply in himself considered; and therefore it is not all in God; 4. and it is not the name of God; 5. but it is, 1. God as he seemeth unsuitable to them, and unfit for their delight and love; which seeming is caused by their carnal inclination to things of another nature, and the sinful perverting of their appetites,

^y Austin, (Tract. 9. in Johan.) having shewed that among men, it maketh no one beautiful to love one that is beautiful, saith, *Anima nostra foeda est per iniquitatem: amando Deum pulchra efficitur: qualis amor qui reddat pulchrum amantem? Deus semper Pater est: amavit nos foedos, ut ex foedis faceret pulchros: pulchri erimus amando eum qui pulcher est. Quantum in te crescit amor, tantum crescit pulchritudo; quia ipsa charitas animæ pulchritudo est.*

and the blindness and error of their minds. 2. And it is God as he is an enemy to their carnal concupiscence ; whose holy nature is against their unholiness, and hateth their sin, and his laws forbid them the things which they most love and take delight in ; and so they hate God, as a madman hateth his keeper and physician, and takes them for his enemies ; and as a hungry dog doth hate him, that keepeth him from the meat which he loveth, or would take out of his mouth. 3. And they hate God, as one by his holiness, justice, and truth is engaged to condemn them for their sin, and so (consequently to their sin) is their enemy that will destroy them (unless they forsake it) : when their wills are enslaved to their sins, and they cannot endure to be forbidden them, and yet see that God will damn them in hell-fire if they cast them not away : this filleth them with displacency against God, as holy and just. 4. And then, consequently, they hate him in the rest of his attributes : as his omniscience, that he always seeth them ; his omnipresence, that he is always with them ; his omnipotency, that he is irresistible and able to punish them : his very mercy as expressed to others, when they must have no part in it ; yea, his very immutability, eternity, and being, as he is to continue an avenger of their iniquity : so that the wicked in despair do wish that there were no God ; and in prosperity, they wish he were not their Governor and Judge, or were unholy and unjust, allowing them to do what they list without account or punishment. Thus God is hated by the wicked according to the measure of their wickedness, and carnal interest, and concupiscence which he is against. Where you may note, 1. that the hatred of God beginneth at the sensual love of things temporal which he forbiddeth ; 2. that the wicked great ones of the world, and those that have the strongest concupiscence, are justly the greatest haters of God, as having the greatest adverse interest, and being most in love with the things which he prohibiteth and will condemn.

V. The Counterfeit of love to God is something that seemeth like it, and yet is consistent with prevalent hatred, or privation of true love, and maketh self-deceiving hypocrites. 1. One is when so much of God is loved as men think hath no opposition to their lusts and carnal interest (as his mercy and readiness to forgive) ; and then they

think that they truly love God, though they hate his holiness and other attributes. 2. Another counterfeit is, to love God upon mistakes, imagining that he is of the sinner's mind, and will bear with him and not condemn him, though he continue sensual and ungodly: this is not indeed to love God, but something contrary to God. If men's fantasies will take God to be like the devil, a friend to sin, and no friend to holiness, and false in his threatenings, &c. and thus will love him; this is so far from being indeed the love of God, that it is an odious blaspheming of him. 3. Another counterfeit is, to love God only for his temporal mercies, as because he preserveth and maintaineth them, when yet he is resisted when he would give them things spiritual. 4. Another is, when the opinionative approbation of the mind, and honouring God with the lips and knee, are mistaken for true love. In a word, whatever love of God respecteth him not as God indeed and is not superlative, but is subservient to creature love, is but a counterfeit.

VI. The Directions for the exercise of the love of God are these.

Direct. 1. 'Consider well that the love of our Creator, Redeemer, and Regenerator, is the very end for which we are created, redeemed, and regenerated; and how just it is, that God should have the end of such excellent works: and that by neglecting or opposing the love of God which is the end, we neglect or oppose the works of creation, redemption, and regeneration themselves.'—Let us plead these works of God with our hearts, and say, ['O sluggish soul! dost thou forget the use for which thou wast created, and for which thou wast endued with rational faculties? Dost thou repent that thou art a man, and refuse the employment of a man? What is the means or instrument good for, but its proper end and use of action? God made the sun to shine, and it shineth; he made the earth to support us and bear fruit, and it doth accordingly: and he made thee to love him, and wilt thou refuse and disobey? How noble and excellent is thy employment in comparison of their's? Is the fruit of the earth, or the labour of thy beast, or the service of any inferior creature, so sweet and honourable a work as thine, to know and love thy bountiful, glorious Creator? How happy is thy lot! how blessed is thy portion in com-

parison of their's? And dost thou forsake thy place, and descend to more ignoble objects, as if thou hadst rather been some silly, sordid animal? If thou hadst not rather be a beast than a man, why choosest thou the love and pleasures of a beast, and refusest the love and pleasures of a man? Is creation, and the image of God in a rational, free soul, a thing to be thus contemned for nothing? What is the sun good for, if it should yield no light or heat? And what art thou good for more than the beasts that perish, if thou know not and love not thy Creator? If God should offer to unman thee and turn thee into a horse or dog, thou wouldst think he thrust thee into misery; and yet thou canst voluntarily and wilfully unman thyself, and take it as thy ease and pleasure. If death came this night to dissolve thy nature it would not please thee: and yet thou canst daily destroy thy nature, as to its use and end, and not lament it! It were better I had never been a man, nor ever had a heart or love within me, if I use it not in the holy love of my Creator. It is true, I have a body that is made to eat, and drink, and sleep; but all this is but to serve my soul in the love of him that giveth me all. Life is not for meat, or drink, or play; but these are for life, and life for the higher ends of life.

‘ 2. Look unto thy Redeemer, drowsy soul! and consider for what end he did redeem thee: Was it to wander a few years about the earth, and to sleep, and sport a while in flesh? Or was it to crucify thee to the world, and raise thee up to the love of God? He came down to earth from love itself, being full of love, to shew the loveliness of God, and reconcile thee to him, and take away the enmity, and by love to teach thee the art of love. His love constrained him to offer himself a sacrifice for sin, to make thee a priest thyself to God, to offer up the sacrifice of an inflamed heart in love and praise; and wilt thou disappoint thy Redeemer, and disappoint thyself of the benefits of his love? The means is for the end; thou mayst as well say, I would not be redeemed, as to say, I would not love the Lord.

‘ 3. And bethink thyself, O drowsy soul, for what thou wast regenerated and sanctified by the Spirit? Was it not that thou mightst know and love the Lord? What is the Spirit of Adoption that is given to believers, but a Spirit of

predominant love to God²? Thou couldst have loved vanity, and doted on thy fleshly friends and pleasures, without the Spirit of God; it was not for these, but to destroy these, and kindle a more noble, heavenly fire in thy breast that the Spirit did renew thee. Examine, search, and try thyself, whether the Spirit hath sanctified thee or not. Knowest thou not, that if “any man have not the Spirit of Christ, the same is none of his³?” And if Christ and his Spirit be in thee, thy love is dead to earthly vanity, and quickened and raised to the most holy God. Live then in the Spirit, if thou have the Spirit: to walk in the Spirit is to walk in love. Hath the regenerating Spirit given thee on purpose a new principle of love, and done so much to excite it, and been blowing the coals so oft, and shall thy carnality or sluggishness yet extinguish it? As thou wouldst not renounce or condemn thy creation, thy redemption, and regeneration, condemn not and neglect not the love of thy Creator, Redeemer, and Regenerator, which is the end of all.]

Direct. II. ‘Think of the perfect fitness of God to be the only object of thy superlative love; and how easy and necessary it should seem to us, to do a work so agreeable to right reason and uncorrupted nature; and abhor all temptations which would make God seem unsuitable to thee.’—[‘O sluggish and unnatural soul! should not an object so admirably fit, allure thee? Should not such attractive goodness draw thee? Should not perfect amiableness win thee wholly to itself? Do but know thyself and God, and then forbear to love him if thou canst! Where should the fish live, but in the water? And where should birds fly, but in the air? God is thy very element: thou diest and sinkest down to brutishness, if thou forsake him or be taken from him. What should delight the smell, but odours? or the appetite, but its delicious food? or the eye, but light, and what it sheweth? and the ear, but harmony? and what should delight the soul, but God? If thou know thyself, thou knowest, that the nature of thy mind inclineth to knowledge; and by the knowledge of effects, to rise up to the cause, and by the knowledge of lower and lesser matters, to ascend to the highest and greatest. And if thou know God,

² Gal. iv. 6.³ 2 Cor. xiii. 5. Rom. viii. 9.

thou knowest, that he is the cause of all things; the maker, preserver, and orderer of all, the Being of beings, the most great, and wise, and good, and happy; so that to know him, is to know all; to know the most excellent, independent, glorious being, that will leave no darkness nor unsatisfied desire in thy soul. And is he not then most suitable to thy mind? If thou know thyself then, thou knowest that thy will, as free as it is, hath a natural, necessary inclination to goodness. Thou canst not love evil, as evil; nor canst thou choose but love apprehended goodness, especially the chiefest good, if rightly apprehended. And if thou know God, thou knowest that he is infinitely good in himself, and the cause of all the good that is in the world, and the giver of all the good thou hast received, and the only fit and suitable good, to satisfy thy desires for the time to come. And yet, shall it be so hard to thee to love, so agreeably to perfect nature, so perfect, and full, and suitable a good? even Goodness and Love itself, which hath begun to love thee? Are any of the creatures which thou lovest so suitable to thee? Are they good, and only good, and perfectly good, and unchangeably and eternally good? Are they the spring of comfort, and the satisfying happiness of thy soul? Hast thou found them so? or dost thou look to find them best at last? Foolish soul! canst thou love the uneven, defective, troublesome creature, if to some one small, inferior use it seemeth suitable to thee? and canst thou not love Him, that is all that rational love can possibly desire to enjoy? What, though the creature be near thee, and God be infinitely above thee? He is nearer to thee than they. And, though in glory he be distant, thou art passing to him in his glory, and wilt presently be there. Though the sun be distant from thee, it communicateth to thee its light and heat, and is more suitable to thee, than the candle, that is nearer thee. What, though God be most holy, and thou too earthly and unclean? is he not the fitter to purify thee, and make thee holy? Thou hadst rather, if thou be poor, have the company and favour of the rich that can relieve thee, than of beggars that will but complain with thee. And if thou be unlearned and ignorant, thou wouldst have the company of the wise and learned that can teach thee, and not of those that are as ignorant as thyself. Who is so suitable to thy

desires, as he that hath all that thou canst wisely desire ; and is willing and ready to satisfy thee to the full ? Who is more suitable to thy love, than he that loveth thee most, and hath done most for thee, and must do all that ever will be done for thee, and is himself most lovely in his infinite perfections ? O poor, diseased, lapsed soul ! if sin had not corrupted, and distempered, and perverted thee, thou wouldst have thought God as suitable to thy love, as meat to thy hunger, and drink to thy thirst, and rest to thy weariness, and as the earth, and water, the air, and sun are to the inhabitants of the world ! O whither art thou fallen ? and how far, how long hast thou wandered from thy God, that thou now drawest back from him as a stranger to thee, and lookest away from him, as an unsuitable good ?']

Direct. III. 'Imagine not God to be far away from thee, but think of him as always near thee and with thee, in whose present love and goodness thou dost subsist.'—Nearness of objects doth excite the faculties : we hear no sound, nor smell any odour, nor taste any sweetness, nor see any colours, that are too distant from us. And the mind being limited in its activity, neglecteth, or reacheth not things too distant, and requireth some nearness of its object, as well as the sense : especially to the excitation of affections and bodily action. A distant danger stirreth not up such fears, nor a distant misery such grief, nor a distant benefit such pleasure, as that which is at hand. Death doth more deeply affect us, when it seemeth very near, than when we think we have yet many years to live. So, carnal minds are so drowned in flesh, and captivated to sense, that they take little notice of what they see not, and therefore think of God as absent, because they see him not : they think of him as confined to heaven, as we think of a friend that is in the East Indies, or at the antipodes, who is, if not out of mind as well as out of sight, yet too distant for us delightfully to converse with him. ['Remember always, O my soul, that none is so near thee as thy God. A Seneca could say, of good men, that 'God is with us, and in us.' Nature taught heathens, that 'in him we live, and move, and have our being.' Thy friend may be absent, but God is never absent from thee : he is with thee, when, as to men, thou art alone. The sun is sufficient to illuminate but one part of the earth

at once ; and therefore must leave the rest in darkness. But God is with thee night and day ; and there is no night to the soul, so far as it enjoyeth him. Thy life, thy health, thy love, and joy, are not nearer to thee than thy God : he is now before thee, about thee, within thee, moving thee to good, restraining thee from evil, marking and accepting all that is well, disliking and opposing all that is ill. The light of the sun doth not more certainly fill the room, and compass thee about, than God doth with his goodness. He is as much at leisure to observe thee, to converse with thee, to hear and help thee, as if thou wert his only creature : as the sun can as well illuminate every bird and fly, as if it shined unto no other creature. Open the eye of faith and reason, and behold thy God ! Do not forget him, or unbelievingly deny him, and then say, 'he is not here.' Do not say, 'that the sun doth not shine,' because thou winkest. O do not quench thy love to God, by feigning him to be out of reach, and taken up with other converse ! Turn not to inferior delights, by thinking that he hath turned thee off to these : and love him not as an absent friend ; but as the friend that is always in thy sight, in thy bosom, and in thy heart ; the fuel that is nearest to the flames of love.']

Direct. iv. ' All other graces must do their part in assisting love, and all be exercised in subservience to it, and with an intention, directly or remotely, to promote it.'—Fear and watchfulness must keep away the sin that would extinguish it, and preserve you from that guilt which would frighten away the soul from God. Repentance and mortification must keep away diverting and deceiving objects, which would steal away our love from God. Faith must shew us God as present, in all his blessed attributes and perfections. Hope must depend on him, for nearer access and the promised felicity. Prudence must choose the fittest season, and means, and helps from our special approaches to him, and teach us how to avoid impediments : and Obedience must keep us in a fit capacity for communion with him. The mind that is turned loose to wander after vanity the rest of the day, is unfit in an hour of prayer or meditation, to be taken up with the love of God. It must be the work of the day, and of our lives, to walk in a fitness for it, though we are not always in the immediate, lively ex-

ercise of it. To sin wilfully one hour, and be taken up with the love of God the next, is as unlikely, as one hour to abuse our parents, and provoke them to correct us, and the next to find the pleasure of their love : or one hour to fall and break one's bones, and the next to run and work, as pleasantly as we did before.

And we must see that all other graces be exercised in a just subserviency to love ; and none of them degenerate into noxious extremes, to the hindrance of this, which is their proper end. When you set yourselves to repent and mourn for sin, it must be from love, and for love : that by ingenuous lamentation of the injuries you have done to a gracious God, you may be cleansed from the filth that doth displease him, and being reconciled to him in Christ, may be fit to return to the exercises and delights of love. When you fear God, let it be with a filial fear, that comes from love, and is but a preservative or restorative for love. Avoid that slavish fear, as a sin, which tendeth to hatred, and would make you fly away from God. Love casteth out this tormenting fear, and freeth the soul from the spirit of bondage. The devil tempteth melancholy persons to live before God, as one that is still among bears or lions that are ready to devour him : for he knoweth how much such a fear is an enemy to love. Satan would never promote such fears, if they were of God, and tended to our good. You never found him promoting your love or delight in God ! But he careth not how much he plungeth you into distracting terrors. If he can, he will frighten you out of your love, and out of your comforts, and out of your wits. A dull and sluggish sinner he will keep from fear, lest it should awaken him from his sin ; but a poor, melancholy, penitent soul he would keep under perpetual terrors : it is so easy to such to fear, that they may know it is a sinful, inordinate fear ; for gracious works are not so easy. And resist also all humiliation and grief, that do not, immediately or remotely, tend to help your love. A religion that tendeth but to grief, and terminateth in grief, and goeth no further, hath too much in it of the malice of the enemy, to be of God. No tears are desirable, but those that tend to clear the eyes from the filth of sin, that they may see the better the loveliness of God.

Direct. v. ' Esteem thy want of love to God, (with the turning of it unto the creature) to be the heart of the old man; thy most comprehensive, odious sin: and observe this as the life of all thy particular sins, and hate it above all the rest.—This is the very death and greatest deformity of the soul: the absence of God's image, and Spirit, and objectively of himself. [' I never loathe my heart so much, as when I observe how little it loveth the Lord. Methinks all the sins that ever I committed, are not so loathsome to me, as this want of love to God. And it is this that is the venom and malignity of every particular sin. I never so much hate myself, as when I observe how little of God is within me, and how far my heart is estranged from him. I never do so fully approve of the justice of God, if it should condemn me, and thrust me for ever from his presence, as when I observe how far I have thrust him from my heart. If there were any sin, which proceeded not from a want of love to God, I could more easily pardon it to myself, as knowing that God would more easily pardon it. But not to love the God of love, the fountain of love, the felicity of souls, is a sin, unfit to be pardoned to any till it be repented of, and partly cured: Christ will forgive it to none that keep it: and when it is incurable, it is the special sin of hell, the badge of devils and damned souls. If God will not, give me a heart to love him, I would I had never had a heart. If he will give me this, he giveth me all. Happy are the poor, the despised, and the persecuted, that can but live in the love of God. O miserable emperors, kings, and lords, that are strangers to this heavenly love, and love their lusts above their Maker! Might I but live in the fervent love of God, what matter is it in what country, or what cottage, or what prison I live? If I live not in the love of God, my country would be worse than banishment; a palace would be a prison; a crown would be a miserable comfort, to one that hath cast away his comfort, and is going to everlasting shame and woe.'] Were we but duly sensible of the worth of love, and the odiousness and malignity that are in the want of it, it would keep us from being quiet in the daily neglect of it, and would quicken us to seek it, and to stir it up.

Direct. vi. ' Improve the principle of self-love, to the

promoting of the love of God, by considering what he hath done for thee, and what he is, and would be to thee.'—I mean not carnal, inordinate self-love, which is the chiefest enemy of the love of God ; but I mean that rational love of happiness, and self-preservation, which God did put into innocent Adam, and hath planted in man's nature as necessary to his government. This natural, innocent self-love, is that remaining principle in the heart of man, which God himself doth still presuppose in all his laws and exhortations : and which he taketh advantage of in his works and Word, for the conversion of the wicked, and the persuading of his servants themselves to their obedience. This is the common principle in which we are agreed with all the wicked of the world, 'that all men should desire and seek to be happy, and choose and do that which is best for themselves ;' or else it were in vain for ministers to preach to them, if we were agreed in nothing, and we had not this ground in them to cast our seed into, and to work upon. And if self-love be but informed and guided by understanding, it will compel you to love God, and tell you that nothing should be so much loved. Every one that is a man must love himself : we will not entreat him, nor be beholden to him for this : and every one that loveth himself, will love that which he judgeth best for himself : and every wise man must know, that he never had, nor can have any good at all, but what he had from God. Why do men love lust, or wealth, or honour, but because they think that these are good for them ? And would they not love God, if they practically knew that he is the best of all for them, and instead of all ? [' Unnatural, unthankful heart ! canst thou love thyself, and not love him that gave thee thyself, and gives thee all things ? Nature teacheth all men to love their most entire and necessary friends : do we deserve a reward by loving those that love us, when publicans will do the like ? Art thou not bound to love them that hate thee, and curse, and persecute thee ? What reward then is due to thy unnatural ingratitude, that canst not love thy chiefest friend ? All the friends that ever were kind to thee, and did thee good, were but his messengers to deliver what he sent thee. And canst thou love the bearer, and not the giver ? He made thee a man, and not a beast. He cast thy lot in his

visible church, and not among deluded infidels, or miserable heathens that never heard, unless in scorn, of the Redeemer's name. He brought thee forth in a land of light, in a reformed church, where knowledge and holiness have as great advantage, as any where in all the world : and not among deluded, ignorant Papists, where ambition must have been thy governor, and pride and tyranny have given thee laws ; and a formal, ceremonious image of piety must have been thy religion. He gave thee parents that educated thee in his fear, and not such as were profane and ignorant, and would have restrained and persecuted thee from a holy life. He spoke to thy conscience early in thy childhood, and prevented the gross abominations which else thou hadst committed. He bore with the folly and frailties of thy youth. He seasonably gave thee those books, and teachers, and company, and helps, which were fittest for thee ; and blest them to the further awakening and instructing of thee, when he passed by others, and left them in their sins. He taught thee to pray, and heard thy prayer. He turned all thy fears and groans to thy spiritual good. He pardoned all thy grievous sins : and since that, how much hath he endured and forgiven ! He gave thee seasonable and necessary stripes, and brought thee up in the school of affliction ; so moderating them, that they might not disable or discourage thee, but only correct thee, and keep thee from security, wantonness, stupidity, and contempt of holy things, and might spoil all temptations to ambition, worldliness, voluptuousness, and fleshly lust. By the threatenings of great calamities and death, he hath frequently awakened thee to cry to Heaven : and by as frequent and wonderful deliverances, he hath answered thy prayers, and encouraged thee still to wait upon him. He hath given thee the hearty prayers of many hundreds of his faithful servants, and heard them for thee in many a distress. He hath strangely preserved thee in manifold dangers. He hath not made thee of the basest of the people, whose poverty might tempt them to discontent ; nor set thee upon the pinnacle of worldly honour, where giddiness might have been thy ruin, and where temptations to pride, and lust, and luxury, and enmity to a holy life, are so violent that few escape them. He hath not set thee out upon a sea of cares and vexations, worldly busi-

nesses and encumbrances; but fed thee with food convenient for thee, and given thee leisure to walk with God. He hath not chained thee to an unprofitable profession, nor used thee as those that live like their beasts, to eat, and drink, and sleep, and play, or live to live; but he hath called thee to the noblest and sweetest work; when that hath been thy business, which others were glad to taste of as a recreation and repast. He hath allowed thee to converse with books, and with the best and wisest men, and to spend thy days in sucking in delightful knowledge: and this is not only for thy pleasure, but thy use; and not only for thyself, but many others. O how many sweet and precious truths hath he allowed thee to feed on all the day, when others are diverted, and commonly look at them sometimes afar off! O how many precious hours hath he granted me, in his holy assemblies, and in his honourable and most pleasant work! How oft hath his day, and his holy, uncorrupted ordinances, and the communion of his saints, and the mentioning of his name and kingdom, and the pleading of his cause with sinners, and the celebrating of his praise, been my delight! O how many hundreds that he hath sent, have wanted the abundant encouragement which I have had! When he hath seen the disease of my despondent mind, he hath not tried me by denying me success, nor suffered me, with Jonas, according to my inclination, to overrun his work; but hath enticed me on by continual encouragements, and strewed all the way with mercies: but his mercies to me in the souls of others, have been so great, that I shall secretly acknowledge them, rather than here record them, where I must have respect to those usual mercies of believers, which lie in the common road to heaven. And how endless would it be to mention all! All the good that friends and enemies have done me! All the wise and gracious disposals of his providence; in every condition, and change of life, and change of times, and in every place wherever he brought me! His every day's renewed mercies! His support under all my languishings and weakness; his plentiful supplies; his gracious helps; his daily pardons; and the glorious hopes of a blessed immortality which his Son hath purchased, and his *covenant and Spirit* sealed to me! O the mercies that are

in one Christ, one Holy Spirit, one Holy Scripture, and in the blessed God himself! These I have mentioned, unthankful heart, to shame thee for thy want of love to God. And these I will leave upon record, to be a witness for God against thy ingratitude, and to confound thee with shame, if thou deny thy love to such a God. Every one of all these mercies, and multitudes more, will rise up against thee, and shame thee, before God and all the world, as a monster of unkindness, if thou love not him that hath used thee thus.']

Here also consider what God is for your future good, as well as what he hath been hitherto : how allsufficient, how powerful, merciful and good. But of this more anon.

Direct. vii. 'Improve the vanity and vexation of the creature, and all thy disappointments, and injuries, and afflictions, to the promoting of thy love to God.'—And this by a double advantage : First, by observing that there is nothing meet to divert thy love, or rob God of it; unless thou wilt love thy trouble and distress ! Secondly, that thy love to God is the comfort by which thou must be supported under the injuries and troubles which thou meetest with in the world : and therefore to neglect it, is but to give up thyself to misery. ['Is it for nothing, O my soul, that God hath turned loose the world against thee ? That devils rage against thee ; and wicked men do reproach and slander thee, and seek thy ruin ; and friends prove insufficient, and as broken reeds ? It had been as easy to God, to have prospered thee in the world, and suited all things to thy own desires, and have strewed thy way with the flowers of worldly comforts and delights ; but he knew thy proneness to undo thyself with carnal loves, and how easily thy heart is enticed from thy God : and therefore he hath wisely and mercifully ordered it, that thy temptations shall not be too strong, and no creature shall appear to thee in an over amiable, tempting dress. Therefore he hath suffered them to become thine enemies : and wilt thou love an enemy better than thy God ? What ! an envious and malicious world ! a world of cares, and griefs, and pains ! a weary, restless, empty world ! How deep and piercing are its injuries ! How superficial and deceitful is its friendship ! How serious are its sorrows ! What toyish shews and dreams are its delights ! How constant are its cares and labours ! How

seldom and short are its flattering smiles ! Its comforts are disgraced by the certain expectation of succeeding sorrows : its sorrows are heightened by the expectations of more : in the midst of its flatteries, I hear something within me saying, ‘ Thou must die ; this is but the way to rottenness and dust.’ I see a winding-sheet and a grave still before me : I foresee how I must lie in pains and groans, and then become a loathsome corpse. And is this a world to be more delighted in than God ? What have I left me for my support and solace, in the midst of all this vanity and vexation, but to look to him that is the allsufficient, sure, never-failing good ? I must love him, or I have nothing to love, but enmity or deceit. And is this the worst of God’s design, in permitting and causing my pains and disappointments here ? Is it but to drive my foolish heart unto himself, that I may have the solid delights and happiness of his love ? O then let his blessed will be done ! Come home my soul ; my wandering, tired, grieved soul ! Love, where thy love shall not be lost : love Him that will not reject thee, or deceive thee ; nor requite thee as the world doth, with injuries and abuse : despair not of entertainment, though the world deny it thee. The peaceable region is above. In the world thou must have trouble, that in Christ thou mayst have peace. Retire to the harbour, if thou wouldst be free from storms. God will receive thee, when the world doth cast thee off, if thou heartily cast off the world for him. O what a solace is it to the soul, to be driven clearly from the world to God, and there to be exercised in that sacred love, which will accompany us to the world of love.’]

Direct. VIII. ‘ Labour for the truest and fullest conceptions of the goodness and excellencies of God, which are his amiableness ; and abhor all misrepresentations of him as unlovely.’—That which is apprehended as unlovely cannot be loved : and that which is apprehended as evil, is apprehended as unlovely. Therefore, it is the grand design of satan to hide God’s goodness, and misrepresent him as evil : not to deny him to be good in himself, for in that he hath no hope to be believed ; but to persuade men that he is not good to them, or to make them forget or overlook his goodness. Not to persuade them that God is evil in himself ; but that he is evil to them, by restraining them from their

beloved sins, and hating them as sinners, and resolving to damn them if they go on impudently. This, which is part of the goodness of God, he maketh them believe is evil, by engaging them in a way and interest, which he knoweth that God is engaged against, and enticing them under the strokes of his justice. And he tempteth believers themselves to poor, diminutive, unworthy thoughts of the goodness and mercifulness of God, and to continual apprehensions of his wrath and terrors. And if he can make them believe that God is their enemy, and think of him only as a consuming fire, how little are they like to love him? If Christians knew how much of the devil's malice against God and them, doth exercise itself in this, to make God appear to man, unlovely, they would more studiously watch against such misrepresentations, and fly from them with greater hatred*. Not that we must first, by the advice of arrogant reason, and self-love, as some do, draw a false description of goodness and amiableness in our minds, and make that the measure of our judgment of God, his nature, attributes, and decrees; nor take his goodness to be only his suitableness to our opinions, wills, and interest. But we must take out from the Word and works of God, that true description of his goodness which he hath given of himself, and expunge out of our conceits whatsoever is contrary to it. Think of God's goodness in proportion with his other attributes. ['O my soul, how unequally hast thou thought of God! Thou easily believest that his power is omnipotence, and that his knowledge is omniscience; but of his goodness, how narrow and poor are thy conceivings! As if it were nothing to his power and knowledge. How oft hast thou been amazed in the consideration of his greatness, and how seldom affected with the apprehensions of his goodness! Thou gratifiest him that would have thee believe and tremble, as he doth himself, and not him that would have thee believe and love. How oft hast thou suffered the malicious enemy

* O orator, in tua oratione plus dilige Deum quam teipsum et alia: et si hoc facis justus es et prudens, et de charitate et sanctitate habitatus. Qui habitus est amicus tuus in oratione. O Orator! quando orabis pro commissis, justitiam Dei tecum tenens diligendo; non autem odiendo; quia si sic, misericordia Dei non posset esse tua amica, eo quia injustus esset; et tuus habitus esset crudelis et à spe et charitate prolongatus, et tuum amare in odire esset perversum, de quo odire esset in æternum habitatus. Raim. Lullius, Arte Magna de Applic. c. cxiv. p. 557, 558.

to accuse God to thee, and make thee believe that he is a hater of man, and hateful to man, or a hater of thee, that he might make thee hate him! How oft hast thou suffered him to draw in thy thoughts a false representation of thy dearest Lord, and shew him to thee as in that unlovely shape! How oft have thy conceptions dishonoured and blasphemed his love and goodness, while thou hast seemed to magnify his knowledge and his power! Think of him now as love itself! As more full of goodness, than the sea of water, or the sun of light! Love freely and boldly, without the stops of suspicions and fears, where thou art sure thou canst never love enough: and if all the love of men and angels were united in one flame, they could never love too much, or come near the proportion of the glorious goodness which they love! Cast thyself boldly into this ocean of delights. Though the narrowness of thy own capacity confine thee, yet, as there are no bounds in the object of thy love, let not false, unbelieving thoughts confine thee. O that I were all eye, to see the glorious amiableness of my God! O that I were all love, that I might be filled with his goodness! O that all the passions of my soul were turned into this holy passion! O that all my fears, and cares, and sorrows, were turned into love! And that all the thoughts that confusedly crowd in upon me and molest me, were turned into this one incessant thought, of the infinite goodness of my God! O that all my tears, and groanings, yea, and all my other mirth and pleasures, were turned into the melodious songs of love! And that the pulse, and voice, and operations of love, were all the motion of my soul! Surely in heaven it will be so, though it is not to be expected here.']

Direct. ix. 'The great means of promoting love to God is duly to behold him in his appearances to man, in the ways of Nature, Grace, and Glory. First, therefore, learn to understand and improve his appearances in Nature, and to see the Creator in all his works, and by the knowledge and love of them to be raised to the knowledge and love of him.'—Though sin hath so disabled us to the due improvement of these appearances of God in nature, that grace must restore us, before we can do it effectually and acceptably; yet objectively nature is still the same in substance, and affordeth us much help to the knowledge and love of

God. He knoweth nothing of the world aright that knoweth not God in it, and by it. Some note, that the greatest students in nature are not usually the best proficient in grace; and that philosophers and physicians are seldom great admirers of piety; but this is to judge of the wise by the foolish, and to impute the ignorance and impiety of some to others that abhor it. Doubtless, he is no philosopher, but a fool, that seeth not and admireth not the Creator in his works. Indeed, if a man doth wholly give himself to know the shape and form of letters, and to write them curiously, or cut them in brass or stone, or to print them, and not to understand their significations or use, no wonder if he be ignorant of the arts and sciences, which those letters well understood would teach him; such a man may be called an engraver, a scrivener, a printer, but not a scholar: and no better can the atheist be called a philosopher or a learned man, that denieth the most wise Almighty Author, while he beholdeth his works, when the nature and name of God is so plainly engraven upon them all. It is a great part of a Christian's daily business to see and admire God in his works, and to use them as steps to ascend by to himself. "The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein. His work is honourable and glorious; and his righteousness endureth for ever. He hath made his wonderful works to be remembered^b."—"I meditate on all thy works; I muse on the works of thy hands^c."—"I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings^d."—"For thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy work. I will triumph in the works of thy hands. A brutish man knoweth not; neither doth a fool understand this^e. As the praising of God's works, so the observing of God in his works is much of the work of a holy soul. "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable. One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts. I will speak of the glorious honour of thy Majesty, and of thy wondrous works. And men shall speak of the might of thy terrible acts; and I will declare thy greatness. They shall abundantly utter the memory of thy great

^b Psal. cxi. 2, 3, 4.^d Psal. lxxvii. 12.^c Psal. cxliii. 5.^e Psal. xcii. 4—6.

goodness, and shall sing of thy righteousness: All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee. The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works^f.”—“That which might be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewn it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made; even his eternal power and Godhead: so that they are without excuse^g.” If we converse in the world as believers and rational creatures ought, we should as oft as David repeat these words: “O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wondrous works to the children of men! And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare his works with rejoicing. They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep^h.” But this is a subject fitter for a volume (of physics theologically handled) than for so short a touch. What an excellent book is the visible world for the daily study of a holy soul! Light is not more visible to the eye in the sun, than the goodness of God is in it and all the creatures to the mind. If I love not God, when all the world revealeth his loveliness, and every creature telleth me that he is good, what a blind and wicked heart have I! O wonderful wisdom, and goodness, and power which appeareth in every thing we see! in every tree, and plant, and flower; in every bird, and beast, and fish; in every worm, and fly, and creeping thing; in every part of the body of man or beast, much more in the admirable composure of the whole; in the sun, and moon, and stars, and meteors; in the lightning and thunder, the air and winds, the rain and waters, the heat and cold, the fire and the earth, especially in the composed frame of all, so far as we can see them set together; in the admirable order and co-operation of all things; in their times and seasons, and the wonderful usefulness of all for man. O how glorious is the power, and wisdom, and goodness of God, in all the frame of nature! Every creature silently speaks his praise, declaring him to man, whose office is, as the world’s high-priest, to stand

^f Psal. cxlv. 3—7. 10. 17.^g Rom. i. 19, 20.^h Psal. cvii. 21—24.

between them and the great Creator, and expressly offer him the praise of all. “When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put down all things under his feet. O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and declare his wondrous works to the children of men! The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord¹.” Thus love God as appearing in the works of nature.

Direct. x. ‘Study to know God as he appeareth more clearly to sinners in his Goodness in the works of Grace; especially in his Son, his covenant, and his saints, and there to love him, in the admiration of his love.’—Here love hath made itself an advantage of our sin and unworthiness, of our necessities and miseries, of the law and justice, and the flames of hell. The abounding of sin and misery hath glorified abounding grace; that grace which fetcheth sons for God from among the voluntary vassals of the devil, which fetcheth children of light out of darkness, and living souls from among the dead, and heirs for heaven from the gates of hell; and brings us as from the gallows to the throne. 1. A believing view of the nature, undertaking, love, obedience, doctrine, example, sufferings, intercession, and kingdom of Jesus Christ, must needs inflame the believer’s heart with an answerable degree of the love of God. To look on a Christ and not to love God is to have eyes and not to see, and to overlook him while we seem to look on him. He is the liveliest image of Infinite Goodness, and the messenger of the most unsearchable, astonishing love, and the purchaser of the most invaluable benefits, that ever were revealed to the sons of men. Our greatest love must be kindled by the greatest revelations and communications of the love of God. And “greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends².” That is, men have no dearer and clearer a way to express

¹ Psal. viii. 3. 6. 9. xxxiii. 5—9. Read Psal. lxxv.

² John xv. 13.

their love to their friends ; but that love is aggravated indeed, which will express itself as far for enemies. “ But God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. And if, when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life¹.” Steep, then, that stiff and hardened heart in the blood of Christ, and it will melt : come near, with Thomas, and by the passage of his wounds get near unto his heart, and it will change thy unkind, unthankful heart into the very nature of love. Christ is the best teacher of the lesson of love that ever the world had ; who taught it not only by his words, but by his blood, by his life, and by his death : if thou canst not learn it of him thou canst never learn it. Love is the greatest commander of love, and the most effectual argument that can insuperably constrain us to it : and none ever loved at the measure and rates that Christ hath loved. To stand by such a fire is the way for a congealed heart to melt, and the coldest affections to grow warm. A lively faith still holding Christ, the glass of infinite love and goodness, before our faces, is the greatest lesson in the art of love.

2. Behold God also in his Covenant of Grace, which he hath made in Christ. In that you may see such sure, such great and wonderful mercies, freely given out to a world of sinners, and to yourselves among the rest, as may afford abundant matter for love and thankfulness to feed on while you live. There you may see how loath God is that sinners should perish ; how he delighteth in mercy ; and how great and unspeakable that mercy is. There you may see an act of pardon and oblivion granted upon the reasonable condition of believing, penitent acceptance, to all mankind : the sins that men have been committing many years together, their wilful, heinous, aggravated sins, you may there see pardoned by more aggravated mercy ; and the enemies of God reconciled to him, and condemned rebels saved from hell, and brought into his family, and made his sons. O what an image of the goodness of God is apparent in the tenor of his word and covenant ! Holiness and mercy make up the whole—they are expressed in every leaf and line !

¹ Rom. v. 8—10.

The precepts, which seem too strict to sinners, are but the perfect rules of holiness and love, for the health and happiness of man. What loveliness did David find in the law itself! and so should we, if we read it with his eyes and heart: it was sweeter to him than honey; he loved it above gold; he crieth out, “O how I love thy law! it is my meditation all the day^m.” And must not the Lawgiver then be much more lovely, whose goodness here appeareth to us? “Good and upright is the Lord; therefore will he teach sinners in the wayⁿ.”—“I will delight myself in thy commandments, which I have loved: my hands also will I lift up to thy commandments, which I have loved; and I will meditate on thy statutes^o.” How delightfully then should I love and meditate on the blessed Author of this holy law! But how can I read the history of love, the strange design of grace in Christ, the mystery which the angels desirously pry into, the promises of life to lost and miserable sinners, and not feel the power of love transform me? “Behold, with what love the Father hath loved us, that we should be called the sons of God^p.” How doth God shed abroad his love upon our hearts, but by opening to us the superabundance of it in his Word, and opening our hearts by his Spirit to perceive it? O when a poor sinner that first had felt the load of sin, and the wrath of God, shall feelingly read or hear what mercy is tendered to him in the covenant of grace, and hear Christ’s messengers tell him, from God, that all things are now ready; and therefore invite him to the heavenly feast, and even to compel him to come in, what melting love must this affect a sinner’s heart with! When we see the grant of life eternal sealed to us by the blood of Christ, and a pardoning, justifying covenant, so freely made and surely confirmed to us, by that God whom we had so much offended, O what an incentive is here for love!

When I mention the Covenant I imply the Sacraments, which are its appendants or confirming seals, and the investing the believer solemnly with its benefits: but in these God is pleased to condescend to the most familiar communion with his church, that love and thankfulness might want no helps. There it is that the love of God in Christ

^m Psal cxix. 127. xcvii.

^o Psal. cxix. 47, 48.

ⁿ Psal. xxv. 8.

^p 1 John iii. 1.

applieth itself most closely to particular sinners; and the meat or drink will be sweet in the mouth, which was not sweet to us on the table at all. O how many a heart hath this affected! How many have felt the stirrings of that love, which before they felt not, when they have seen Christ crucified before their eyes, and have heard the minister, in his name and at his command, bid them 'Take,' and 'Eat,' and 'Drink;' commanding them not to refuse their Saviour, but take him and the benefits of his blood as their own; assuring them of his good-will and readiness to forgive and save them?

3. Behold also the loveliness of God in his holy ones, who bear his image, and are advanced by his love and mercy. If you are Christians indeed, you are taught of God to love his servants, and to see an excellency in the saints on earth, and make them the people of your delight^a. And this must needs acquaint you with the greater amiableness, in the most Holy God, that made them holy. O how oft have the feeling and heavenly prayers of lively believers, excited those affections in me, which before I felt not! How oft have I been warmed with their heavenly discourse! How amiable is that holy, heavenly disposition and conversation which appeareth in them! Their faith, their love, their trust in God, their cheerful obedience, their hatred of sin, their desire of the good of all, their meekness and patience; how much do these advance them above the ignorant, sensual, proud, malignant, and ungodly world! How good then is that God that makes men good! And how little is the goodness of the best of men, compared to his unmeasurable goodness! Whenever your converse with holy men, stirs up your love to them, rise by it presently to the God of saints, and let all be turned to him that giveth all, to them and to you.

And as the excellency of the saints, so their privilege and great advancement, should shew you the goodness of God, that doth advance them. As oft as thou seest a saint, how poor and mean in the world soever, thou seest a living monument of the abundant kindness of the Lord. Thou seest a child of God, a member of Christ, an heir of heaven. Thou seest one that hath all his sins forgiven, and is snatch-

^a Psal. xvi. 1, 2. 1 Thes. iv. 9.

ed as a brand out of the fire, and delivered from the power of satan, and translated into the kingdom of Christ. Thou seest one for whom Christ hath conquered the powers of hell; and one that is freed from the bondage of the flesh; and one that, of the devil's slave, is made a priest, to offer up the sacrifices of praise to God. Thou seest one that hath the Spirit of God within him; and one that hath daily intercourse with heaven, and audience with God, and is dearly beloved by him in Christ. Thou seest in flesh a companion of angels, and one that hath the Divine nature, and must shortly be above the stars in glory, and must be with Christ, and must love and magnify God for ever. And is not the amiableness of God apparent, in such mercy bestowed upon sinful man? And should we not now begin to admire him in his saints, and glorify him in believers, who will come with thousands of his angels, to be glorified and admired in them at the last^r? O the abundant deliverances, preservations, provisions, encouragements, which all his servants receive from God! Who ever saw the just forsaken, even while they think themselves forsaken? "For the Lord loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever. The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide. Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace^s." "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints^t." "Ye that love the Lord, hate evil: he preserveth the souls of his saints; he delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked. Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart^u." "O love the Lord all his saints! for the Lord preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer^x."

Direct. xi. 'Insist not so much on your desires after vision, as to undervalue the lower apprehensions of faith: but love God by the way of faith, as in order to the love of intuition.

We are exceeding apt to be over-desirous of sight; and to take nothing as an object fit to affect us, which sense perceiveth not. When we have the surest evidence of the truth of things unseen, it hardly satisfieth us, unless we may

^r 2 Thes. i. 10.^s Psal. xxxvii. 25, 28, 31, 37.^t Psal. cxvi. 15.^u Psal. xcvi. 10, 11.^x Psal. xxxi. 23.

see or feel. And hereupon; our love to God is hindered; while we think of him as if he were not, or take the apprehensions of faith, as if they were uncertain, and little differed from a dream. Yea, it proveth the ground of most dangerous temptations to infidelity itself. While we take that knowledge which we have of God, in the way of faith, the love and communion which is exercised thereby, to be as nothing; we are next tempted to think, that there is no true knowledge of God, and communion with him to be attained. And when we have been searching and striving long, and find that we can reach no more, we are tempted to think, that the soul of man is made but as the beasts, for present things, and is incapable of those higher things, which are revealed in the Gospel; and that if there were indeed a life to come, and man was made to enjoy his God, we should get nearer to him than we are, and know him more, and love him better. [‘ But is it nothing, O presumptuous soul, to see God in a glass, in order to a nearer sight? Is it nothing to have the heavenly Jerusalem described and promised to thee, unless thou see it and possess it? Wilt thou travel to no place, but what thou seest all the way? Wouldst thou have no difference betwixt earth and heaven? What canst thou have more in heaven, than immediate intuition? Wouldst thou have no life of trial, in obedience of faith, before the life of fruition and reward? Or canst thou think that a life of sight and sense, is fit for trial and preparation, to shew who is meet for the rewarding life? Unthankful soul! Compare thy state with that of brutes: is it nothing for thee to know thy Maker in the works of his creation and providence, and in the revelations of grace, and the belief of promised immortality, unless thou presently see him in his glory? When these thy fellow creatures know him not at all? Compare thyself now, with thyself as heretofore, in the days of thy ignorance and carnality. Hadst thou then any such knowledge of God, as thou now undervaluest? or any such communion with him, as thou now accountest next to none? When the light first shined in thine eyes, and thou hadst first experience of the knowledge of God, thou thoughtest it something, and rejoicedst in the light: if then thou couldst have suddenly attained but to so much, as thou hast now attained, wouldst

thou have called it nothing? Would it not have seemed a greater treasure to thee, than to have known both the Indies as thine own? O be not unthankful for the little which thou hast received, when God might have shut thee out in that darkness which the greatest part of the world lieth in, and have left thee to thyself, to have desired no higher knowledge, than such as may feed thy fancy, and pride, and lust. Art thou so far drowned in flesh and sense, as to take intellectual apprehensions for dreams, unless thy sense may see and feel? Wilt thou take thy soul, thyself for nothing, because thou art not to be seen or felt? Shall no subjects honour and obey their king, but they that have seen his court and him? Desire the fullest and the nearest sight; the purest and the strongest love; and desire and spare not the life where all this will be had: but take heed of being too hasty with God, and unthankful for the mercies of the way. Know better the difference betwixt thy travail and thy home: and know what is fit for passengers to expect. Humbly submit to an obedient waiting in a life of faith: and make much of the testament of Christ, till thou be at age to possess the inheritance. Thou must live, and love, and run, and fight, and conquer, and suffer by faith, if ever thou wilt come to see and to possess the crown.']

Direct. XII. 'It is a powerful means to kindle the love of God in a believer, to foresee by faith the glory of heaven, and what God will be there to his saints for ever.'—And thus to behold God in his Glory, is the use of Grace. Though the manner of knowing him thus by faith, be far short of what we there expect, yet it is the same God and glory that now we believe, which then we must more openly behold. And therefore, as that apprehension of love will inconceivably excel the highest which can be here attained; so the forethoughts of that, doth excel all other arguments and means to affect us here; and will raise us as high as means can raise us. The greatest things, and greatest inte-

✓ Read Julian Toletan. his Prognosticon. Si in cœlis fidelibus hæc servatur hæreditas, frivola quædam et tepida proferunt aliqui, putantes eam se percipere in terrena Jerusalem; mille annis existimant esse deliciarum præmia proprietate recepturos: qui interrogandi sunt, quomodo astruant delicias corporales, dum dicatur hanc hæreditatem nec corrumpi posse nec marcescere. Didymus Alexand. in Petr. 1. cont. Millesar.

rest of our souls being there, will greatly raise us to the love of God, if any thing will do it : to foresee how near him we shall be ere long ; and what a glorious proof we shall have of his good will ; and how our souls will be ravished everlastingly with his love ! To think what hearts the blessed have that see his glory, and live with Christ ! How full of love they are ! and what a delight it is to them thus to love ! must needs affect the heart of a believer. [‘ Lift up thy head, poor drowsy sinner ! Look up to heaven, and think where thou must live for ever ! Think what the holy ones of God are doing ! Do they love God, or do they not ? Must it not then be thy life and work for ever ? And canst thou forbear to love him now, that is bringing thee to such a world of love ? Thou wouldst love him more, that would give thee security to possess a kingdom which thou never sawest, than him that giveth thee but some toy in the hand. And let it not seem too distant to affect thee : the time is as nothing till thou wilt be there : thou knowest not but thou mayst be there this night. There thou shalt see the Maker of the worlds, and know the mysteries of his wondrous works. There thou shalt see thy blessed Lord, and feel that love which thou readest of in the Gospel, and enjoy the fruits of it for ever. There thou shalt see him that suffered for thee, and rose again, whom angels see and worship in his glory. Thou shalt see there a more desirable sight, than those that saw him heal the blind, and lame, and sick, and raise the dead ; or those that saw him in his transfiguration ; or than those that saw him on the cross, or after his resurrection ; or than Stephen saw when he was stoned ; or Paul when he was converted ; yea, more than it is like he saw when he was in his rapture, in the third heavens ! O who can think believingly on the life which we must there shortly live, the glory which we must see, the love which we must receive, and the love which we must exercise, and not feel the fire begin to flame, and the glass in which we see the Lord, become a burning-glass to our affections !’] Christ and Heaven are the books which we must be often reading ; the glasses in which we must daily gaze, if ever we will be good proficient and practitioners in the art of holy love.

Direct. XIII. ‘ Exercise your souls so frequently and di-

ligerly in this way of love, that the method of it may be familiar to you, and the means and motives still at hand, and you may presently be able to fall into the way, as one that is well acquainted with it, and may not be distracted and lost in generals, as not knowing where to fix your thoughts.' —I know no methods alone will serve to raise the dead, and cause a carnal, senseless heart to love the Lord. But I know that many honest hearts, that have the spirit of love within them, have great need to be warned, that they quench not the Spirit; and great need to be directed how to stir up the grace which is given them: and that many live a more dull, or distracted, uncomfortable life, than they would do, if they wanted not skill and diligence. The soul is most backward to this highest work, and therefore hath the greater need of helps: and the best have so much need as that it is well if all will serve to keep up loving and grateful thoughts of God upon their minds. And when every trade, and art, and science, requireth diligence, exercise, and experience, and all are bunglers at it at the first, can we reasonably think that we are like to attain any high degrees, with slight, and short, and seldom thoughts?

Direct. xiv. 'Yet let not weak-headed or melancholy persons, set themselves on those methods or lengths of meditation, which their heads cannot bear; lest the tempter get advantage of them, and abate their love, by making religion seem a torment to them; but let such take up with shorter, obvious meditations, and exercise their love in an active, obediential way of living.'—That is the best physic that is fitted to the patient's strength and case: and that is the best shoe that is meetest for the foot, and not that which is the biggest or the finest. It is a great design of satan, to make all duties grievous and burdensome to us; and thereby to cast us into continual pain, and fear, and trouble, and so destroy our delight in God, and consequently, our love. Therefore pretend not to disability for carnal unwillingness and laziness of mind; but yet mar not all by grasping at more than you are able to bear. Take on you as you are able, and increase your work, if God increase your strength. If a melancholy person crack his brain with immoderate, unseasonable endeavours, he will but disable himself for all.

Direct. xv. ‘Keep clear, and hold fast the evidences of thy sincerity, that thou mayst perceive thy interest in the love of God, and resist the temptations which would hide his love to thee, and cause thee to doubt of it, or deny it.’—Satan hath not his end when he hath troubled thee, and robbed thee of thy peace and comfort: it is worse that he is seeking to effect by this: his malice is more against God, than against thee; and more against God and thee, in this point of love, than in any other grace or duty. He knoweth that God esteemeth this most: and he knoweth if he could kill thy love, he kills thy soul. And he knoweth how natural it is to man, to love those that love him, and hate those that hate him, be they never so excellent in themselves. And therefore, if he can persuade thee into despair, and to think that God hateth thee, and is resolved to damn thee, he will not despair of drawing thee to hate God. Or if he do but bring thee to fear that he loveth thee not, he will think accordingly to abate thy love. I know that a truly gracious soul keepeth up its love, when it loseth its assurance; and mourneth, and longeth, and seeketh in love, when it cannot triumph and rejoice in love: but yet there are some prints left on the heart, of its former apprehensions of the love of God: and such souls exceedingly disadvantage themselves as to the exercises of love, and make it a work of wondrous difficulty. O! it will exceedingly kindle love, when we can see God’s surest love-tokens in our hearts, and look to the promises, and say, ‘They are all mine;’ and think of heaven, as that which shall certainly be our own: and can say with Thomas, “My Lord, and my God:” and with Paul, that “The life which I live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, that loved me, and gave himself for me.” Denial of our grace may seem to be humility, but it tendeth to extinguish love and gratitude.

‘But,’ you will say, ‘I must avoid soul-delusion and Pharisaical ostentation on the other side. And few reach assurance; how then should we keep up the love of God?’

Ans. 1. Though I am not come to the point of trying and discerning grace, I shall give you this much help in the way, because it is so useful to the exercises of love. (1.) If you have not enjoying, delighting love, yet try whether you

have not desiring, seeking love. Love appeareth as truly, in desiring and seeking good, as in delighting in it. Poor men shew their love of the world, by desiring and seeking it, as much as rich men do in delighting in it. What is it that you most desire and seek? (2.) Or if this be so weak that you scarce discern it, do you not find a mourning and lamenting love? You shew that you loved your money, by mourning when you lose it; and that you loved your friend, by grieving for his death, as well as by delighting in him while he lived. If you heartily lament it as your greatest unhappiness and loss, when you think that God doth cast you off, and that you are void of grace, and cannot serve and honour him as you would, this shews you are not void of love. (3.) If you feel not that you love him, do you feel that you would fain love him, and that you love to love him? If you do so, it is a sign that you do love him. When you do not only desire to find such an evidence of salvation in you, but when you desire love itself, and love to love God. Had you not rather have a heart to love him perfectly, than to have all the riches in the world? Had you not rather live in the love of God, if you could reach it, than to live in any earthly pleasure? If so, be sure he hath your hearts. The will is the love, and the heart: if God have your will, he hath your heart and love. (4.) What hath your hearts if he have them not? Is there any thing that you prefer and seek before him, and that you had rather have than him? Can you be content without him, and let him go, in exchange for any earthly pleasure? If not, it is a sign he hath your hearts. You love him savingly, if you set more by nothing else than by him. (5.) Do you love his holy image in his Word? Do you delight and meditate in his law? Is it in your hearts? Or do you pray, "Incline my heart unto thy testimonies?" If you love God's image in his Word, (the wisdom and holiness of it) you love God. (6.) Do you love his image on his children? If you love them for their heavenly wisdom and holiness, you so far love God. He that loveth the candle for its light, doth love the light itself and the sun: he that loveth the wise and holy, for their wisdom and holiness, doth love wisdom and holiness themselves. The Word and the saints being more

in the reach of our sensible apprehensions, than God himself is, we ordinarily feel our love to them, more sensibly than our love to God; when indeed it is God, in his Word and servants that we love^a. Though, for want of assurance you feel not the delights of love, have you not a heart that would delight in it, more than in all the riches of the world, if you could but get assurance of your interest? Would it not comfort you more than any thing, if you could be sure he loveth you, and could perfectly love him and obey him? If so, it is not for want of love that you delight not in him, but for want of assurance. So that if God have thy heart, either in a delighting love, or a seeking and desiring, or a lamenting, mourning love, he will not despise it or reject it. "He is nigh to them that be of a broken heart:" "A broken and contrite heart is his sacrifice, which he will not despise:" The "good Lord will have mercy on every one that prepareth their hearts to seek him, though they do it not according to the preparation of the sanctuary^b." By these evidences, you may discern the sincerity of love in small degrees: and so you may make love the occasion of more love, by discerning that goodness of God which is manifested to you in the least.

2. But suppose you cannot yet attain assurance; neglect not to improve that goodness and mercy of God which he revealeth to you in the state that you are in. Love him, but as Infinite Goodness should be loved, who "so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life^c." Love him, as the most blessed and merciful God, who made you and all things, and hath given to the world an universal pardon, on condition of their penitent acceptance, and offereth them everlasting life, and all this purchased by the blood of Christ. Love him, as one that offereth you reconciliation, and entreateth you to be saved: and as one that delighteth not in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn and live: and as one that would have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth, though he will save none but the penitent, that do acknowledge the truth. And when you love him sincerely

^a 1 John iii. 14. Psal. xv. 4.

^b Psal. xxxiv. 18. li. 17.

^c John iii. 16.

on these accounts, you will have the evidence of his special love to you.

Direct. xvi. ‘Improve thy sense of natural and friendly love, to raise thee to the love of God.’—When thou seest or feelest what love a parent hath to children, and a husband to a wife, or a wife to a husband, or faithful friends to one another; think then, [‘What love do I owe to God? O how inconsiderable is the loveliness of a child, a wife, a friend, the best of creatures, in comparison of the loveliness of God! Unworthy soul! canst thou love a drop of goodness in thy friend; and canst thou not love the ocean of goodness in thy God? Is a spark in the creature more amiable than the fire that kindled it? Thou canst love thy friend for all his blemishes, his ignorance, his passions, and manifold imperfections: and canst thou not love thy God, who hath none of these, nor any thing to discourage or damp thy love? Thou lovest, and deservedly lovest thy friend, because he loveth thee, and deals friendly with thee: but O! how much greater is the love of God! Did ever friend love thee, as he hath loved thee? Did ever friend do for thee, as he hath done? He gave thee thy being, thy daily safety, and all the mercies of thy life! He gave thee his Son, his Spirit, and his grace! He pardoned thy sins, and took thee into his favour, and adopted thee for his son, and an heir of heaven! He will glorify thee with angels in the presence of his glory! How should such a friend as this be loved! How far above all mortal friends! Their love and friendship is but a token and message of his love. Because he loveth thee, he sendeth thee kindness and mercy by thy friend: and when their kindness ceaseth, or can do thee no good, his kindness will continue, and comfort thee for ever. Love them therefore as the messengers of his love: but love him in them, and love them for him, and love him much more.’]

Direct. xvii. ‘Think oft, how delightful a life it would be to thee, if thou couldst but live in the love of God: and then the complacency will provoke desire, and desire will turn thy face towards God, till thou feel that thou lovest him.’—The love of a friend hath its sweetness and delight: and when we love them, we feel such pleasure in our love, that we love to love them. How pleasant then would it be

to love thy God ! [' O blessed, joyful life, if I could but love him as much as I desire to love him ! How freely could I leave the ambitious, and the covetous, and the sensual, and voluptuous, to their doting, delusory, swinish love ! How easily could I spare all earthly pleasures ! How near should I come to the angelical life ! Could I love God as I would love him, it would fill me with continual pleasure, and be the sweetest feast that a soul can have. How easily would it quench all carnal love ! How far would it raise me above these transitory things ! How much should I condemn them, and pity the wretches that know no better, and have their portion in this life ! How readily should I obey, and how pleasant would obedience be ! How sweet would all my meditations be, when every thought is full of love ! How sweet would all my prayers be, when constraining love did bring me unto God, and indite and animate every word ! How sweet would sacraments be, when my ascending, flaming love, should meet that wonderful, descending love which cometh from heaven to call me thither, and in living bread, and spiritual wine is the nourishment and cordial of my soul ! How sweet would all my speeches be, when love commanded them, and every word were full of love ! How quiet would my conscience be, if it had never any of this accusation against me, to cast in my face, to my shame and confusion, that I am wanting in love to the blessed God ! O could I but love God with such a powerful love as his love and goodness should command, I should no more question my sincerity, nor doubt any more of his love to me. How freely then should I acknowledge his grace, and how heartily should I give him thanks for my justification, sanctification, and adoption, which now I mention with doubt and fear ! O how it would lift up my soul unto his praise, and make it my delight to speak good of his name ! What a purifying fire would love be in my breast, to burn up my corruptions ! It would endure nothing to enter or abide within me, that is contrary to the will and interest of my Lord ; but hate every motion that tendeth to dishonour and displease him. It would fill my soul with so much of heaven, as would make me long to be in heaven, and make death welcome, which is now so terrible. Instead of these withdrawing, shrinking fears, I should desire to depart and to

be with Christ, as being best of all. O how easily should I bear any burden of reproach, or loss, or want, when I thus loved God and were assured of his love ! How light would the cross be ! And how honourable and joyful would it seem, to be imprisoned, reviled, spit upon, and buffeted for the sake of Christ ! How desirable would the flames of martyrdom seem, for the testifying of my love to him that loved me at dearer rates than I can love him ! Lord, is there no more of this blessed life of love to be attained here on earth ? When all the world reveals thy goodness ; when thy Son hath come down to declare thy love, in so full and wonderful a manner ; when thy Word hath opened us a window into heaven, where afar off we may discern thy glory ; yet, shall our hearts be clods, and ice ? O pity this unkind, unnatural soul ! This dead, insensible, disaffected soul ! Teach me by thy Spirit, the art of love ! Love me, not only so as to convince me that I have abundant cause to love thee above all, but love me, so as to constrain me to it, by the magnetical, attractive power of thy goodness, and the insuperable operations of thy omnipotent love.']

Direct. xviii. ' In thy meditations upon all these incentives of love, preach them over earnestly to thy heart, and expostulate and plead with it by way of soliloquy, till thou feel the fire begin to burn.'—Do not only think on the arguments of love, but dispute it out with thy conscience, and by expostulating, earnest reasonings with thy heart, endeavour to affect it. There is much more moving force in this earnest talking to ourselves, than in bare cogitation, that breaks not out into mental words. Imitate the most powerful preacher that ever thou wast acquainted with : and just as he pleadeth the case with his hearers, and urgeth the truth and duty on them, by reason and importunity, so do thou in secret with thyself. There is more in this than most Christians are aware of, or use to practise. It is a great part of a Christian's skill and duty, to be a good preacher to himself. This is a lawful and a gainful way of preaching. Nobody here can make question of thy call, nor deny thee a licence, nor silence thee, if thou silence not thyself. Two or three sermons a week from others, is a fair proportion ; but two or three sermons a day from thyself, is ordinarily too little. Therefore, I have added Soliloquies to many

of these Directions for Love, to shew you how, by such pleadings with yourselves, to affect your hearts, and kindle love.

And O that this might be the happy fruit of these Directions with thee that art now reading or hearing them! That thou wouldst but offer up thy flaming heart to Jesus Christ our great High Priest, to be presented an acceptable sacrifice to God. Or, if it flame not in love as thou desirest, yet give it up to the Holy Spirit to increase the flames. Thou little knowest how much God setteth by a heart. He calleth to thee himself, "My son, give me thy heart^d." Without it, he cares not for any thing that thou canst give him: he cares not for thy fairest words without it: he cares not for thy loudest prayers without it: he cares not for thy costliest alms or sacrifices, if he have not thy heart. "If thou give all thy goods to feed the poor, and give thy body to be burned, and have not love, it will profit thee nothing. If thou speak with the tongue of men and angels, and hast not love, thou art but as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. If thou canst prophesy, and preach to admiration, and understand all mysteries and knowledge, and hast faith to do miracles, and have not love, thou art nothing^e." Thou hast but a shadow, and wantest that which is the substance and life of all. Come then, and make an agreement with God, and resolve now to offer him thy heart. He asketh thee for nothing which thou hast not: it is not for riches and lands that he seeketh to thee; for then the poor might say as Peter, "silver and gold have I none:" give him but such as thou hast, and it sufficeth. He knoweth that it is a polluted, sinful heart; but give it him, and he will make it clean. He knoweth that it is an unkind heart, that hath stood out too long; but give it him yet, and he will pardon and accept it. He knoweth that it is an unworthy heart; but give it him, and he will be its worth: only see that you give it him entirely and unreservedly; for he will not bargain with the devil, or the world, for the dividing of thy heart between them. A half-heart and a hollow-heart, that is but lent him till fleshly interest or necessity shall call for it again, he will not accept. Only resign it to him, and do but consent that thy heart be his, and entirely and absolutely

^d Prov. xxiii. 26.

^e 1 Cor. xiii. 1—3.

his, and he will take it and use it as his own. It is his own by title : let it be also so by thy consent. If God have it not, who shall have it ? Shall the world, or pride, or fleshly lust ? Did they make it, or did they purchase it ? Will they be better to thee in the time of thy extremity ? Do they bid more for thy heart than God will give thee ? He will give thee his Son, and his Spirit, and image, and the forgiveness of all thy sins : if the greatest gain, or honour, or pleasure will win it and purchase it, he will have it : if heaven will buy it, he will not break with thee for the price. Have the world and sin a greater price than this to give thee ? And what dost thou think that he will do with thy heart ? and how will he use it, that thou art loath to give it him ? Will he blind it, and deceive it, and corrupt it, and abuse it, and at last torment it, as satan will do ? No ; he will more illuminate it, and cleanse it, and quicken it^f : he will make it new, and heal and save it^g : he will advance and honour it with the highest relations, employments, and delights : for Christ hath said, “ If any man serve me, let him follow me ; and where I am, there shall also my servant be. If any man serve me, him will my Father honour^h. ” He will love it, and govern it, and comfort it, and the heart that is delivered to him shall be kept near unto his own. “ For the Father himself loveth you,” saith Christ, “ because you have loved meⁱ. ” Whereas, if thou deliver not thy heart to him, it will feed on the poison of luscious vanity, which will gripe and tear it when it is down : it will be like a house that nothing dwelleth in, but dogs, and flies, and worms, and snakes : it will be like one that is lost in the wilderness, or in the night, that tireth himself in seeking the way home, and the longer the worse : despair and restlessness will be its companions for ever. Let me now once more in the name of God bespeak thy heart. I will not use his commands or threatenings to thee now, though these, as seconds, must be used, because that love must have attractive arguments, and is not raised by mere authority or fear. If there be not love and goodness enough in God, to deserve the highest affections of every reasonable creature, then let him go, and give thy heart to one that is better. Hear how God pleadeth his

^f Psal. li. 10. Ephes. ii. 1. Jer. xxiv. 7.

^g Ezek. xxxvi. 26. 2 Cor. v. 17.

^h John xii. 26.

ⁱ John xxvi. 27.

own cause with an unkind, unthankful people, "Hear O ye mountains the Lord's controversy. O my people what have I done unto thee? and wherein have I wearied thee? testify against me^k." What is there in him to turn away thy heart? Let malice itself say the worst, without notorious impudence, against him: what hath he ever done that deserveth thy disaffection and neglect? What wouldst thou have to win a heart that is not in him? For which of his mercies or excellencies is it, that thou thus contemnest and abusest him? What dost thou want that he cannot, yea, or will not give thee? Doth not thy tongue speak honourably of his goodness, while thy heart contradicteth it, and denieth all? What hast thou found that will prove better to thee? Is it sin or God that must be thy glory, rest, and joy, if thou wilt not be a fire-brand of restlessness and misery for ever? What sayst thou yet sinner? Shall God, or the world and fleshly pleasures have thy heart? Art thou not yet convinced which best deserveth it, and which will be best to it? Canst thou be a loser by him? Will he make it worse, and sin make it better? Or wilt thou ever have cause to repent of giving it up to God, as thou hast of giving it to the world and sin? I tell thee, if God have not thy heart, it were well for thee if thou hadst no heart.—I had a thousand times rather have the heart of a dog, or the basest creature, than that man's heart that followeth his fleshly lusts, and is not unfeignedly delivered up to God, through Christ.

If I have not prevailed with your hearts for God, by all that I have said, your consciences shall yet bear me witness, that I shewed you God's title, and love, and goodness, and said that which ought to have prevailed: and you shall find ere long, who it is that will have the worst of it: but if you resolve and give them presently to God, he will entertain them, and sanctify, and save them: and this happy day and work will be the angels joy: and it will be my joy, and especially your own everlasting joy.

Grand Direct. XII. 'Trust God with that soul and body which thou hast delivered up and dedicated to him; and

^k Mic. vi. 2, 3.

quiet thy mind in his love and faithfulness, whatever shall appear unto thee, or befall thee in the world.'

I shall here briefly shew you, 1. What is the Nature of this trust in God¹. 2. What are the Contraries to it. 3. What are the Counterfeits of it. 4. The Usefulness of it. And then 5. I shall give you some Directions how to attain and exercise it.

I. To trust in God, is, upon the apprehension of the all-sufficiency, goodness, and faithfulness of God, to quiet our hearts in the expectation of the safety or benefits from him which we desire, rejecting the cares, and fears, and griefs that would disquiet them, if they had not the refuge of these hopes^m. It containeth in it a crediting the Word or nature of God, or judging it to be a sufficient ground of our security and expectation: and then security and expectation built upon that ground, make up the rest of the nature of trust. Looking for the benefit, and finding a complacency and quietness of mind in the ground discovered, and ceasing all other cares and fears, which would else disquiet us. Aquinas and other school-men, often call affiance, '*spes roborata*,' a confirmed hope. There is a two-fold trust in God: one is, for that which he hath not promised to do, but yet we think that we find reason sufficient, from his nature itself, and relations, to expect: this may be more or less certain and strong, as our collection of the will of God, from his nature, is more or less sure and clear. The other is, when we have not only God's nature, but his promise also to trust upon: and this giveth us a certainty, if we certainly understand his promise. To the last sort I may reduce that trust in God for particular benefits, when we have only a promise in general, which maketh not the particulars known and certain to us: as the promise, that all shall work together for our good, doth give us but a probability of health or outward protection and deliverances, because we are uncertain how far they are for our good. All that is promised is sure: but whether this or that be good for us, must be otherwise known. But those general promises which contain

¹ Of the nature of Affiance and Faith, I have written more fully in my disputation with Dr. Barlow, of Saving Faith.

^m SOLA fide Deo SOLI constanter adhære. A SOLO cunctis eripiere malis. Peucerus's Distich, in his ten years imprisonment. Scult. Curric. p. 22.

particulars as surely known as the promise itself, do make every one of the particular benefits as sure, by promise, as the general : as, the promise of the pardon of all our sins, ascertaineth us of the pardon of every sin in particular. Where there is a promise, we trust God's faithfulness as well as his nature ; but where there is none, we trust his nature only. As a child doth quietly trust his parents, without a promise, that they will not kill, or torment, or forsake him. But because man is apt to make false collections of God's will from his nature, he hath given us such clear expressions of it in his Word, as may bring us above uncertain probabilities, and are sufficient for faith to ground upon (supposing God's properties) for our government and peace. And it is certain that all collections of God's will, which are contrary to his Word, are the errors of the collector.

In what I have said in this Direction, I desire you chiefly to observe these three things : 1. That God's nature and love, are the sufficient, general security to the soul. 2. That his promise is the sufficient, particular security. 3. And that our unfeigned, self-dedication to him, is our sufficient evidence of our interest in his love and covenant, which may warrant our special trust and expectations.

II. The Contraries to trust in God, are : 1. Privative : not trusting him : not seeing the ground of just security in his love and promise : not crediting what is seen : not ceasing disquietness and distrustful cares and fears. 2. Positive distrust : supposing the allsufficiency, goodness, and promises of God, are not sufficient grounds of our expectation and security ; and thereupon disquieting our minds with sinful fears, and griefs, and cares, and shifting endeavours for ourselves some other way. And this hath various degrees : in some it is predominant ; in others not. 3. Opposite or adverse : when we trust ourselves, or friends, or wealth, or something else instead of God, either against him, without him, or in co-ordination with him.

III. The Counterfeits of this trust are these : 1. When indeed we trust in our wit, or power, or shifts, or friends, or in some means or creatures only, or in co-ordination with God ; but pretend and think that we do it but in subordination to him, and that our primary trust is in him alone. The detection of this is by trying how we can trust God

alone, when he giveth us a promise and no probable mean. 2. Pretending to trust God alone in the neglect of those means which he hath appointed us to use, and in the neglect of those duties which he hath made the condition of his promises; and this trust is but a self-deceiving cover for sin and sloth. 3. Pretending to trust God in the use of self-devised, sinful means; when he hath promised a blessing to no such means, but threatened them with a curse. 4. Thinking we trust God, when it is some false revelation of the devil, or some delusion of deceivers, or some dream, or fancy, or brain-sick, proud conceit of our own, which indeed we believe, and ground our trust upon: as those do that are deluded by false prophets and false teachers, and fantastical fancies of their corrupted imaginations. 6. When men in presumption and carnal security will rashly venture their souls in the darkness of uncertainty (as well as in the neglect of a holy life) and cast away all the sense of their miserable state; and all the necessary fear and care that tended to their recovery, and persuade themselves that they are in no great danger, or that their care will do no good, and call all this a trusting God with their salvation. 7. A pretending to trust God for that which is contrary to his nature: as to love the wicked with complacency, or to take them into heaven. 8. A pretending to trust God for that which is contrary to his Word: as to save the unregenerate and unholy; and so 'not believing him' itself, is taken for a believing in him, or trusting him. 9. Pretending to believe and trust him for that which neither his nature or his Word did ever declare to be his will, in matters which he hath kept secret, or never gave us any revelation of; such is that which some call a particular faith: as to believe in prayer that some particular never promised shall be granted, because we ask it, or because we feel a strong persuasion that it will be so.

Quest. 'But is not such a particular faith and trust divine and solid?'—*Ans.* To expect any particular mercy which God's nature, or Word, or works do tell us that he will give is sound and warrantable: and to expect any particular thing which by inspiration, prophecy, or true extraordinary revelation shall be made known to us; for this is a Word of God: but all other belief and expectation is but

self-promising and self-deceiving. And wise men will not **easily** take themselves for prophets, nor take any thing for ~~an~~ inspiration, or divine, extraordinary revelation, which **bringeth** not the testimony of cogent evidence.

IV. There are three great Uses and Benefits of this trust in God, which highly commend it to us, and make it necessary. 1. It is necessary to our acknowledgment and honouring of God. It is a cordial, practical confession of his power, and wisdom, and goodness, and truth : for where any one of these is wanting, there is no ground of rational trust. And the greater the danger or assault against us is, the more God is acknowledged and honoured by our trust ; for then we declare, that no creature or impediment can disappoint his will : but that his power is above all power, and his wisdom above all wisdom, and his goodness and fidelity constant and invincible. Whereas distrust is a denying of God in some of his attributes, or a suspecting of him. 2. It is necessary to ourselves, for the quiet, and peace, and comfort of our minds, which else will be left unavoidably to continual disquietness and pain, by vexatious fears, and griefs, and cares, unless stupidity or deceit should ease them. 3. It is necessary to prevent the errors and sinful miscarriage of our lives. For if we trust not in God, we shall spend all our thoughts and labours in the use of sinful means ; we shall be trusting idolatrously to the creature, and we shall be shifting for ourselves by lies or any unlawful means, and lose ourselves by saving ourselves, as from God, or without God.

Hence it is, that trust in God is so frequently and earnestly commanded in the Scriptures, and such blessings promised to it, as if it were the sum of godliness and religion. “ Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord. —Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord isⁿ.—Whoso trusteth in the Lord, happy is he^o.—Blessed are all they that put their trust in him^p. —O taste and see that the Lord is good : blessed is the man that trusteth in him^q.” Safety, stability, comfort, salva-

ⁿ Jer. xvii. 5. 7.

^p Psal. ii. 12.

^o Prov. xvi. 20.

^q Psal. lxxxiv. 12. xxxiv. 8.

tion, all mercies are promised to them that trust in God^r. So faith in Christ is called trust^s; and idolaters and worldlings are described, by trusting in their idols and their wealth^t.

Directions for a quieting and comforting Trust in God.

Direct. i. ‘ Let thy soul retain the deepest impression of the almightiness, wisdom, goodness, and faithfulness of God, and how certainly all persons, things, and events are in his power; and how impotent all the world is to resist him, and that nothing can hurt thee but by his consent.’ —The principal means for a confirmed confidence in God is to know him, and to know that all things that we can fear are nothing, and can do nothing, but by his command, and motion, or permission. I am not afraid of a bird or a worm, because I know it is too weak for me: and if I rightly apprehend how much all creatures are too weak for God, and how sufficient God is to deliver me, his trust would quiet me. “ Fear thou not; for I am with thee; be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee^u.” —They that know thy name will put their trust in thee^x. —“ Harken unto me ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be afraid of their revilings: for the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool^y.”

Direct. ii. ‘ Labour for a sound and clear understanding of the promises of God, that thou mayst know how far he calleth thee to trust him.’ —For to think that he promiseth what he doth not, is not to trust him, but to deceive thyself; and to think that he doth not promise what indeed he doth, is to cast away the ground of trust.

Direct. iii. ‘ Yield not to the tempter, who would either entice thee into terrifying guilt, and blot thine evidences, or else hide them from thee, and keep thee doubtful and suspicious of the love of God.’ —For almost all that the dis-

^r Psal. xxxiv. 22. xxxvii. 3. 5. 40. xci. 2. 4. cxxv. 1. Isa. l. 10.

^s Matt. xii. 21. Ephes. i. 12, 13.

^t Psal. cxv. 8. cxxxv. 18. Amos vi. 1. Mark x. 14. Prov. xi. 28. xxviii. 26.

^u Isa. xli. 10.

^x Psa. xi. 10.

^y Isa. li. 8.

trustful soul hath to say for itself, to justify its distrust, is, **I am not sure that the promises are mine.** Remember still, that a heart dedicated to God, or consenting to his covenant, is your fullest evidence; and suffer not this to be hid or blotted. Wilful sin and guiltiness breeds fears, and will interrupt your trust and quiet till it be forsaken.

Direct. iv. ‘Remember the grounds of confidence and quietness which God hath given you in his Son, his covenant, his Spirit, his sacraments, and your own and others’ manifold experiences.’—I name them all together, because I would have you set them all together before your eyes. Will he not give you “all things with him,” that hath “given you his Son?” Is not Christ a sufficient undertaker and encourager? Are not his covenant, promise, and oath sufficient security for you? “Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew to the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation^y.” And are not the heavenly seal and earnest of his Spirit sufficient to confirm us^z?” And have you tried God so oft, and yet cannot you trust him? Our frequent experiences, though the least of all these helps of trust, are very powerful, because they are near us, and almost satisfy sense itself; when all our bones say, “Lord, who is like unto thee, who deliverest the poor^a!” &c.

Direct. v. ‘Consider of the greatness of the sin of distrust: how it denieth God in his attributes, and usually supposeth the creature to be above him.’—Either thou doubttest of, or deniest his power to help thee, or his wisdom as deficient in making his promises, or finding out the means of thy deliverance, or his goodness and love, as if he would deceive thee, and so his truth and faithfulness in his promises. And if thou fear a man how great soever, when God calleth thee to trust him for thy help, what dost thou but say, This man is more powerful than God? Or God cannot deliver me out of his hands? If it be want, or sickness, or death which thou fearest, what dost thou but say

^y Heb. vi. 17, 18.

^z 2 Cor. i. 22. v. 5. Ephes. i. 13, 14. iv. 30.

^a Psal. xxxv. 10.

in thy heart, that God either knoweth not what is best for thee so well as thou knowest thyself, or else is not powerful or gracious enough to give it? nor true enough to keep his promise? “He that believeth not, makes God a liar^b.”

Direct. vi. ‘Remember that trusting God doth, as it were, oblige him, and distrusting him doth greatly disoblige him, especially when any thing else is trusted before him.’—If any man trust you upon any encouragement given him by you, you will take yourselves obliged to be trusty to him, and not to fail any honest trust; but if he trust you not, or trust another, you will turn him off to those that he hath trusted. God may say to thee, Let them help thee whom thou hast trusted: thou trustedst not in me, and therefore I fail not thy trust when I forsake thee.

Direct. vii. ‘Remember that thou must trust in God, or in nothing.’—For nothing is more sure, nor more frequently experienced, than that all things else are utterly insufficient to be our help. Shall we choose a broken reed, that we know beforehand will both deceive and pierce us? Woe to the man that hath no surer a foundation for his trust than creatures? The greatest of them are unable; and the best of them are untrusty and deceitful. How sad is thy case, if God turn thee off to these for help in the hour of thy extremity! Then wilt thou perceive, that “it is better to trust in the Lord, than to put any confidence in princes^c.”—“The righteous also shall see, and fear, and laugh at him: Lo, this is the man that hath made not God his strength; but trusted in the abundance of his riches, and strengthened himself in his wickedness^d.”—“But they that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, that cannot be removed, but abideth for ever^e.” Creatures will certainly deceive thy trust, but so will not God.

Direct. viii. ‘Believe and remember the particular providence of God, which regardeth the falling of a sparrow on the ground, and numbereth the very hairs of your heads^f.’—And can you distrust him, that is so punctually regardful of your least concerns? that is always present, and watcheth over you? You need not fear his absence, dis-

^b 1 John v. 10, 11.

^c Psal. cxviii. 8, 9.

^d Psal. lii. 6, 7.

^e Psal. cxxv. 1.

^f Matt. x. 30.

regard, forgetfulness, or insufficiency. Doth he number your hairs, and doth he not number your groans, and prayers, and tears? How then doth he wipe away your tears, and put them all as in his bottle?

Direct. ix. ‘ Compare God with thy dearest and most faithful friend, and then think how boldly thou canst trust that friend if thy life or welfare were wholly in his hand ; and how much more boldly thou shouldst trust in God, who is more wise, and kind, and merciful, and trusty than any mortal man can be.’—When thou art in want, in prison, in sickness and in pain expecting death, think now if my life, or health, or liberty were absolutely in the power of my surest friend, how quietly could I wait, and how confidently could I cast away my fears, though I had no promise what he would do with me ; for I know he would do nothing but what is for my good : and is not God to be trusted in much more ? Indeed a friend would ease my pain, or supply my wants, or save my life, when God will not : but that is not because God is less kind but because he is more wise, and better knoweth what tendeth to my hurt or good ? My friend would pull off the plaster as soon as I complain of smart ; but God will stay till it have done the cure. But, surely, God is more to be trusted for my real, final good, though my friend be forwarder to give me ease. All friends may fail ; but God never faileth.

Direct. x. ‘ Make use of thy natural love of quietness, and thy natural weariness of tormenting cares, and fears, and sorrows, to move thee to cast thyself on God, and quiet thyself in trusting on him.’—For God hath purposely made thyself and all things else insufficient, unsatisfactory, and vexatious to thee, that thou mightst be driven to rest on him alone, when nothing else affords thee rest. Cares, and fears, and unquietness of mind are such thorns and briars as nature cannot love or be content with : and you may be sure that you can no way be delivered from them, but by trusting upon God. And will you choose care and torment, when so sure and cheap a way of ease is set before you ? Who can endure to have fears torment him, and cares feed daily upon his heart, that may safely be delivered from it ? An ulcerated, festered, pained mind is a greater

calamity than any bodily distress alone. And if you be cast upon your own care, or committed to the trust of any creature, you can never rationally have peace. For your own ease and comfort then betake yourselves to God, and cast all your care and burden on him, who careth for you, and knoweth perfectly what you want^h. Read often Matt. vi. from ver. 24. How sweet an ease and quietness is it to the mind that can confidently trust in God? How quiet is he from the storms of trouble and the sickness of mind, which others are distressed with? “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strengthⁱ.—He shall not be afraid of evil tidings; his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord; his heart is established; he shall not be afraid^k.—Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought, for them that trust in thee, before the sons of men. Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man; thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues. Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord^l.—What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee. In God I will praise his word; in God have I put my trust: I will not fear what flesh can do unto me^m.” How easy and sweet a life is this!

Direct. xi. ‘Remember that distrust is a pregnant, multiplying sin, and will carry thee to all iniquity and misery if thou suffer it to prevail.’—Distrusting God is but our entrance upon a life of error, sin, and woe. It presently sets us on idolatrous confidence on flesh, and sinful shifts, and stretching conscience; it deludeth our judgments, and maketh every thing seem lawful, which seems necessary to our safety and welfare; and every thing seem necessary, without which man cannot accomplish it. All sinful compliances, and temporizings, and man-pleasing, and believing sinful means to be no sin, proceed from this distrust of God.

Direct. xii. ‘Suffer not distrustful thoughts and rea-

^h 1 Pet. v. 7. Matt. vi. 32.

ⁱ Psal. xxxi. 19, 20.

^j Isai. xxvi. 3, 4.

^m Psal. lvi. 3, 4.

^k Psal. cxiii. 7, 8.

sonings in thy mind, but cast them out, and command them to be gone.'—Cogitations are the instruments of good and evil in the mind of man; they cannot be acted but by thoughts, and the will hath more command of the thoughts than it hath immediately of the passions themselves. If you cannot trust God so quietly as you would, nor keep under every fearful apprehension, yet keep out, or cast out the thoughts which exercise your sin, and turn your thoughts to something else. If thoughts do not actuate it, your distrustful fears and cares will vanish. What are your cares, but the turmoiling of your thoughts? continually feeding upon difficulties and trouble, and tiring themselves with hunting about for help? Cast away the thoughts, and the cares are gone. You may do much in this if you will, though it be difficult. "Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, nor yet for your bodies, what ye shall put on. Which of you, by taking thought, can add one cubit to his stature? And why take ye thought for raimentⁿ?"

Direct. XIII. 'When commands will not prevail, rebuke and chide thy unbelieving heart, and reason it out of its distrustful cares, and fears, and sorrows.'—Say to it, as David oft, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou so disquieted within me? Trust in God, for I shall yet give him thanks, who is the health of my countenance, and my God^o." O foolish soul! hast thou yet learned no better to know thy God? Doth he support the heavens and the earth, and the whole creation? and yet canst thou not rely upon him? Is he not wise enough to be trusted with the conduct and disposal of thee? Is he not good and gracious enough to be trusted with thy life, estate, and name, and welfare? Is he not great and powerful enough to be trusted against the greatest danger, or difficulties, or opposition that ever can befall thee? Is he not true and faithful enough to be trusted, whatever improbabilities may arise before thee? Where dwelt the man, and what was his name, that ever trusted him in vain, or was ever failed or deceived by him? Are not his Son, and Spirit, and covenant, and oath, sufficient pledges of his love for thy security? How oft hath he performed his promises to thee, and

ⁿ Matt. vi. 25, 27, 28.

^o Psal. xlii. & xliii.

heard thy cries, and helped and saved thee in thy distress? How oft hath he confuted thine unbelief, and shamed thy distrustful fears and cares? and then thou couldst resolve to trust him better in the next distress. And shall all his wonders of mercy be forgotten? and all thy confessions, thanksgivings, and promises be now repented of, contradicted, or recanted, by thy renewed distrust and unbelief? Is he not the same God, that hath so frequently and abundantly had mercy on thee? Is he not the same God, that hath saved all that trusted in him, and wrought such wonders for his servants in the earth, and brought so many safe to heaven? "Our fathers trusted in him; they trusted, and he delivered them; they cried to him, and were delivered; they trusted in him, and were not confounded?" And is he not sufficient for thee, that is sufficient for all the world? Who ever sped ill that trusted in him? or who hath prospered by trusting in themselves or any other, without him, or against him? Unworthy soul! wilt thou atheistically deny the sufficiency, or truth, or goodness of thy God? Shall thy distrust deny him, or blaspheme him? Wilt thou idolatrously set up a worm above him? Is there more in man, or any thing else, to hurt or ruin thee, than in God to save thee? Whom wilt thou trust, if thou trust not God? Darest thou think that any other is fitter for thy confidence? Thou wouldst be quiet and confident if thy dearest friend had thy life or welfare in his hands; and art thou troubled now it is in the hands of God? Is he enough to be our endless happiness in heaven, and not to be thy confidence on earth? Canst thou trust him to raise thy body from the dust, and not raise thy state, or name, or troubled mind? Either take him for thy rock and hope, or never pretend to take him for thy God. If thou trust not in him, thou must despair, or trust against him; and whom wilt thou trust to save thee from him? Hadst thou no more encouragement to trust him but this, that he hath bid thee trust him, thou mightst be sure he never would deceive thee. Lament, therefore, thy disquietment and self-tormenting fears; lament thy injurious distrust of thy most dear Almighty Father. Choose not vexation, when the harbour of his love is open to secure thee. If men or devils are against thee, say

as those, believers, "We are not careful to answer thee in this matter; our God whom we serve is able to deliver us^a." Go on, with Daniel, in praying to thy God, and trust him with the lions' jaws. "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust in him, and he shall bring it to pass^r." "Some trust in chariots, and some in horses, but I will remember the name of the Lord our God^s." "Trust in him, for he is thy hope and shield^t."

Direct. xiv. 'Take not the sayings of the tempter or thy own distrustful heart for the sayings of God, or for any reason against thy confidence in him.'—Some take all the malicious suggestions of the devil, for the reasons of their disquietness and fears, as if it were the Spirit of God that raised all the terrors and molestations in them, which are raised by the enemy of God and them: and they fear when satan bids them, thinking it is the Spirit of God; and they dare not trust God when he commandeth them, for fear lest it be the will of satan. Some are so strongly affected with their own conceits and fancies, that they think God saith all that their hearts or fancies say, and make one fear the reason of another. Thy heart is not so wise or good, as that thou shouldst take all its words for the words of God. Thy "flesh and thy heart" may "fail thee," when God, who is the "rock of thy heart and thy portion," will never fail^u. Thy heart may say, I have no grace, no help, no hope, when God never said so^v. Thy heart may say, I am a reprobate, forsaken of God, he will not hear me, the time of grace is past, when God never said so. Thy heart may say, I am undone, I can find no comfort in any friend, no evidence of grace within me, no comfort in God, in Christ, or in the promises, no comfort in my life, which is but a burden to me; I cannot pray, I cannot believe, I cannot answer the objections of satan, I can strive no longer against my fears, I cannot bear my wounded conscience. All this is the failing of the heart; but proveth not any failing of God, whose grace is sufficient for thee, and his strength is manifested in thy weakness. The heart hath a thousand sayings and conceits, which God is utterly against.

^a Dan. iii. 16, 17.^r Psal. xxxvii. 5.^s Psal. xx. 7.^t Psal. cxv. 9, 10, 11.^u Psal. lxxiii. 26.^v Psal. lxxvii. 7, 8, 9, 10.

Direct. xv. ‘When you cannot exercise a trust of assurance, exercise the trust of general faith, and hope, and the quiet submission of thyself to the holy will of God.’—The common pretence of distrust is, ‘I know not that I am a child of God:’ and ‘it beseems the ungodly to fear his wrath.’ But, as the Gospel is tidings of great joy to any people where it cometh; so is it a word of hope and trust. At least trust God so far as infinite goodness should be trusted, who will damn none but the finally obstinate refusers of his saving grace. And with Aaron^x, hold your peace, when he is glorifying himself in his corrections. Remember, that the will of God is never misguided; that it is the beginning and end of all things^y; that it never willeth any thing but good; that it is the centre and end of all our wills. There is no rest or quietness for our wills, but in the will of God: and his will is always for the good of them that truly desire to be conformed to it, by obedience to his commands, and submission to his disposal. Say, therefore, with your Saviour, “Father, if it be thy will, let this cup pass from me; but not as I will, but as thou wilt.” There is nothing got by struggling against the will of God; nor anything lost by a quiet submission to it. And, if thou love it, and desire to obey and please it, trust in it, for it will surely save thee.

Grand Direct. xiii. ‘Diligently labour that God and Holiness may be thy chief Delight: and this holy Delight may be the ordinary temperament of thy religion.’

Directions for Delighting ourselves in God.

Direct. 1. ‘Rightly understand what delight in God it is that you must seek and exercise.’—It is not a mere sensitive delight, which is exercised about the objects of sense or fancy, and is common to beasts with men: nor is it the delights of immediate intuition of God, such as the blessed have in heaven: nor is it an enthusiastic delight, consisting in irrational raptures, and joys, of which we can give no account of the reason^z. Nor is it a delight inconsistent with

^x Lev. x. 3.

^y Rev. iv. 11. Rom. xi. 36.

^z Of enthusiastic impressions I have said more in my *Directions for the Cure of Church Divisions*, and in the defence of it, and in other books.

Sorrow and fear, when they are duties; but it is the solid, rational complacency of the soul in God and holiness, arising from the apprehensions of that in him, which is justly delectable to us. And it is such, as, in estimation of its object, and inward complacency and gladness, though not in passionate joy or mirth, must excel our delight in temporal pleasure; and must be the end of all our humiliations, and other inferior duties.

Direct. II. ‘Understand how much of this holy delight may be hoped for on earth.’—Though too many Christians feel much more fear and sorrow in their religion than delight, yet every true Christian doth esteem God more delectable, or fit, and worthy of his delights, if he could enjoy him: whereas to the carnal, fleshly things do seem more fit to be their delights. And though most Christians reach not very high in their delights in God, yet God hath prescribed us such means, in which, if we faithfully used them, we might reach much higher. And this much we might well expect: 1. So much as might make our lives incomparably more quiet, contented, and pleasant to us, than are the lives of the greatest or happiest worldlings. 2. So much as might make our thoughts of God and the life to come, to be ready, welcome, pleasant thoughts to us. 3. So much as might greatly prevail against our inordinate griefs and fears, and our backwardness to duties, and weariness in them, and might make religion an ordinary pleasure. 4. So much as might take off our hankering desire after unnecessary recreations and unlawful pleasures of the flesh. 5. So much as might sweeten all our mercies to us, with a spiritual perfume or relish. 6. So much as might make some sufferings joyful, and the rest more easy to us. 7. And so much as might make the thoughts of death less terrible to us, and make us desire to be with Christ.

Direct. III. ‘Understand what there is in God and holiness, which is fit to be the soul’s delight.’—As, 1. Behold him in the infinite perfections of his being: his omnipotence, omniscience, and his goodness; his holiness, eternity, immutability, &c. And as your eye delighteth in an excellent picture, or a comely building, or fields, or gardens, not because they are yours, but because they are a delectable object to the eye; so let your minds delight themselves

in God, considered in himself, as the only object of highest delight. 2. Delight yourselves also in his relative attributes, in which are expressed his goodness to his creatures: as his allsufficiency, and faithfulness or truth, his benignity, his mercy, and compassion, and patience to sinners, and his justice unto all. 3. Delight yourselves in him as his glory appeareth in his wondrous works, of creation and daily providence. 4. Delight yourselves in him as he is related to you, as your God and Father, and as all your interest, hope, and happiness are in him alone. 5. Delight yourselves in him as his excellencies shine forth in his blessed Son. 6. And as they appear in the wisdom and goodness of his Word, in all the precepts and promises of the Gospel^a. 7. Delight thyself in his image, though but imperfectly printed on thy soul; and also on his holy servants^b. 8. Delight yourselves in the consideration of the glory which he hath from all his creatures, and the universal fulfilling of his will: as the prosperity and happiness of your friend delighteth you, and the success of any excellent enterprises, and the praise of excellent things and persons, and as you have a special delight in the success of truth, and the flourishing order, and unity, and peace, and prosperity of kingdoms, especially of the church, much more than in your personal prosperity, unless you have selfish, private, base, unmanly dispositions; so much more should you delight in the glory and happiness of God. 9. Delight yourselves in the safety which you have in his favour and defence; and the treasury which you have in his allsufficiency and love, for your continual supplies in every want, and deliverance in every danger; and the ground of quiet contentedness and confidence which is offered to fearful souls in him. 10. Delight yourselves in the particular discoveries of his common mercies to the world, and his special mercies to his saints, and his personal mercies to yourselves, from your birth to this moment, both upon your souls, and bodies, and friends, and names, and estates, and affairs in all relations. 11. Delight yourselves in the privilege you enjoy of speaking to him, and of him, and hearing from him, and adoring and worshipping him, and singing, and publishing his praise, and in the communion which your souls may have with him through

^a Psal. cxix. 162. Jer. xv. 16.^b Gal. ii. 20. 1 Cor. xv. 10. 2 Cor. vii. 18.

Christ, on his days, and at all times, in his sacraments, and in all your lives. And say as Solomon, "And will God indeed dwell on earth? Will he dwell and walk with sinful men? When the heaven of heavens cannot contain him^c." "Let those that seek him rejoice and be glad in him^d." Let us be glad to go to the house of the Lord, and join with his holy assemblies in his worship. "The streams" of his grace "make glad the city of God, the holy tabernacles of the Most High: God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved^e." 12. Delight yourselves above all in the forethoughts and hope of the glory which you shall see and enjoy for ever. I do but name all these for your memory, because they are before spoken of in the Directions for love.

Direct. iv. 'Understand how much these holy delights are pleasing unto God, and how much he is for his people's pleasure.'—For it much hindereth the joy of many Christians, that they think it is against the will of God, that such as they should so much rejoice; or at least that they apprehend not how much he hath commanded it, and how great a duty it is, and how much pleasing to their God. Consider, 1. It is not for nothing that the nature of man is made capable of higher and larger delights, than the brutish, sensual nature is: and that in this we are made little lower than angels. 2. Nor is it for nothing that God hath made delight and complacency, the most powerful, commanding affection, and the end of all the other passions, which they professedly subserve and seek: and the most natural, inseparable affection of the soul, there being none that desireth not delight. 3. Nor is it in vain that God hath provided and offered such plenty of most excellent objects for our delight, especially himself, in his Attributes, Love, Mercy, Son, Spirit, and Kingdom: which brutes were not made to know or to enjoy. 4. Nor hath he given us in vain, such excellent, convenient, and various helps, and inferior preparations which tend to our delight; even for body and mind, to further our delight in God. 5. Nor is it in vain that he maketh us yet more nearly capable by his Spirit; even by affecting humiliations and mortifying, cleansing, illuminating, and quickening works: and that the kingdom of heaven consisteth in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy

^c 1 Kings viii. 27.^d Psal. xl. 16.^e Psal. xli. 4.

Ghost : and that the Spirit hath undertaken to be the Comforter of believers, who is sent upon no low or needless work. 6. Nor did Christ purchase his people's joys in vain, by the price of his grievous sufferings and sorrows. Having borne our griefs, and being made a man of sorrows, that we that see him not, might rejoice in believing, with joy unspeakable and full of glory. 7. Nor is it in vain that he hath filled his word with such matter of delight and comfort, in the most glad tidings that could come to man, and in such free, and full, and faithful promises. 8. Nor hath he multiplied his commands for his rejoicing and delight, in vain ; again and again commanding us to rejoice, and always to rejoice. 9. Nor is it insignificant that he hath forbidden those worldly cares, and fears, and griefs which would devour their joys. Nor that he hath so clearly shewed them the way to joy, and blameth them if they walk not in it. 10. He filleth up their lives with mercies, and matter of delight, by his direction, support, provisions, and disposals : and all this in their way of trial, and in the valley of tears. 11. How tender is he of their sufferings and sorrows ; not afflicting willingly, nor delighting to grieve the sons of men. 12. He taketh not away their delight and comfort, till they cast it away themselves, by sinning, or self-afflicting, or neglecting his proposed pleasures. 13. He never faileth to meet them with his delights, while they walk in the way prescribed to that end : unless when it tendeth to their greater pleasure, to have some present interruption of the pleasure. 14. In their greatest needs, when themselves and other helps must fail, he giveth them oftentimes the greatest joys. 15. And he taketh their delights and sorrows as if they were his own. In all their afflictions he is afflicted, and he delighteth in their welfare, and rejoiceth over them to do them good. Cannot you see the will of your Father in all this ? 16. If you cannot, yet lift up your heads, and foresee the eternal delights which he hath prepared for you, when you shall enter into your Master's joy : and then judge whether God be for your delight ?

Direct. v. ' Take special notice of the reasons why God commandeth you to delight in him, and consequently how much of religion consisteth in these delights.'—1. Thou vilifiest and dishonourest him, if thou judge him not the wor-

thiest for thy delights. 2. If thou delight not in him, thy thoughts of God will be seldom, or unwelcome and unpleasant thoughts. 3. And thy speeches of him will be seldom, or heartless, forced speeches. Who knoweth not how readily our thoughts and tongues do follow our delight? Be it house, or land, or books, or friends, or actions, which are our delight, we need no force to bring our thoughts to them. The worldling thinks and tasteth of his wealth and business: the proud man, of his dignities and honour: the voluptuous beast, of his lusts, and sports, and meats, and drinks; because they most delight in these. And so must the Christian of his God, and hopes, and holy business, as being his delight^f. 4. It will keep you away from holy duties, in which you should have communion with God, if you have no delight in God and them. This makes so many neglect both public and secret worship, because they have no delight in it; when those that delight in it are ready in taking all opportunities. 5. It will corrupt your judgments, and draw you to think that a little is enough, and that serious diligence is unnecessary preciseness, and that one quarter of your duty is an excess. A man that hath no delight in God and godliness, is easily drawn to think, that little, and seldom, and cold, and formal, and heartless, lifeless preaching and praying may serve the turn, and any lip-service is acceptable to God, and that more is more ado than needs. And hence, he will be further drawn to reproach those that go beyond him, to quiet his own conscience, and save his own reputation; and at last to be a forlorn, satanical reviler, hater, and persecutor of the serious, holy worshippers of God. "Behold the word of the Lord, is a reproach to them: they have no delight in it: therefore I am full of the fury of the Lord^g." 6. If you delight not in it, you will do that which you do, without a heart, with backwardness and weariness: as your ox draweth unwillingly in the yoke, and is glad when you unyoke him: and as your horse that goeth against his will, and will go no longer than he feels the spur, when delight would cause alacrity and unweariedness. 7. It makes men apt to quarrel with the Word, and every weakness in the minister offendeth them, as sick stomachs

^f *Lætari in Deo est res omnium summa in terris.* Bucholtzer.

^g *Jer. vi. 10.*

that have some fault or other still to find with their meat. 8. It greatly inclineth men to carnal and forbidden pleasures, because they taste not the higher and more excellent delights. Taverns, and ale-houses, plays, and whores, cards, and dice, and excess of recreation must be sought out for them, as Saul sought a witch and a musician instead of God. It would be the most effectual answer to all the silly reasonings of the voluptuous, when they are pleading for the lawfulness of their unnecessary, foolish, time-wasting sports, if we could but help them to the heavenly nature, and hearts that more delight in God^h. This better pleasure is an argument that would do more to confute and banish their sinful pleasure, than a twelve-months disputing or preaching will do with them, while they are strangers to the soul's delight in God. Then they would rather say to their companions, 'O come and taste those high delights, which we have found in God!' 9. The want of a delight in God and holiness, doth leave the soul as a prey to sorrows: every affliction that assaulteth it may do its worst, and hath its full blow at the naked, unfortified heart: for creature delights will prove but a poor preservative to it. 10. This want of a delight in God and holiness, is the way to apostasy itself. Few men will hold on in a way that they have no delight in, when all other delights must be forsaken for it. The caged hypocrite, while he is cooped up to a stricter life than he himself desires, even while he seemeth to serve him, is loathsome to God: for the body without the will is but a carcase or carrion in his eyes. If you had rather not serve God, you do not serve him while you seem to serve him. If you had rather live in sin, you do live in sin, reputationally, while you forbear the outward act: for in God's account, the heart, or will, is the man: and what a man had rather be (habitually) that he is indeed. And yet, this hypocrite will be still looking for a hole to get out of his cage, and forsake his unbeloved outside of religion: like a beast that is driven in a way that he is loath to go, and will be turning out at every gap. All these mischiefs follow the want of delight in God.

6. On the contrary, the benefits which follow our delight

^h Tres sunt virtutis conditiones, tentationis remotio, actuum multiplicatio, et in bono delectatio. P. Scaliger.

in God, (besides the sweetness of it,) are unspeakable. Those which are contrary to the forementioned hurts, I leave to your own consideration. 1. Delight in God will prove that thou knowest him, and lovest him, and that thou art prepared for his kingdom: for all that truly delight in him shall enjoy him. 2. Prosperity, which is but the small addition of earthly things, will not easily corrupt thee or transport thee. 3. Adversity, which is the withholding of earthly delights, will not much grieve thee, or easily deject thee. 4. Thou wilt receive more profit by a sermon, or good book, or conference, which thou delightest in, than others, that delight not in them, will do in many. 5. All thy service will be sweet to thyself, and acceptable to God: if thou delight in him, he doth certainly delight in thee¹. Thou hast a continual feast with thee, which may sweeten all the crosses of thy life, and afford thee greater joy than thy sorrow is, in thy saddest case. 7. When you delight in God, your creature-delight will be sanctified to you, and warrantable in its proper place; which in others is idolatrous, or corrupt. These, with many others, are the benefits of delight in God.

Direct. vi. ‘Consider how suitable God and holiness are to be the matter of thy delight, and take heed of all temptations which would represent him as unsuitable to you.’—He is, 1. Most perfect and blessed in himself. 2. And full of all that thou canst need. 3. He hath all the world at his command for thy relief. 4. He is nearest to thee in presence and relation in the world. 5. He hath fitted all things in religion to thy delight, for matter, variety, and benefit. 6. He will be a certain and constant delight to thee: and a durable delight, when all others fail. Thy soul came from him, and therefore naturally should tend to him: it is from him, and for him, and therefore must rest in him, or have no rest. We delight in the house where we were born, and in our native country, and in our parents; and every thing inclineth to its own original: and so should the soul to its Creator.

Direct. vii. ‘Corrupt not your minds and appetites with contrary delights.’—Addict not yourselves to fleshly pleasures: taste nothing that is forbidden. Sorrow itself is

¹ Psal. cxlvii. 11. cxlix. 4. 1 Chron. xxix. 17.

not such an enemy to spiritual delights, as sensual, sinful pleasures are. O leave your beastly and your childish pleasures, and come and feast your souls on God. Away with the delights of lust, and pride, and covetousness, and van sports, and gluttony, and drunkenness, if ever you would have the solid and durable delights! Think not of joining both together. Bethink yourselves: can it be any thing but the disease and wickedness of thy heart, than can make a play, or a feast, or drunken, wanton company, more pleasant to thee than God? What a heart is that which thinketh it a toil to meditate on God and heaven; and thinks it a pleasure to think of the baits of pride and covetousness? What a heart is that which thinks that sensuality, wantonness, and vanity are the pleasure of their families, which must not be turned out; and that godliness, and heavenly discourse, and exercises, would be the sadness and trouble of their families, which must not be brought in, lest it mar their mirth; that thinks it an intolerable toil and slavery to love God, and holiness, and heaven, and to be employed for them; and thinks it a delightful thing to love a whore, or excess of meat, or drink, or sports? Can you say any thing of a man that is more disgraceful, unless you say he is a devil? It were not so vile for a child to delight more in a dog than in his parents, or a husband to delight more in the ugliest harlot than in his wife, as it is for a man to delight more in fleshly vanities than in God. Will you be licking up this dung, when you should be solacing your souls in angelical pleasures, and foretasting the delights of heaven? O how justly will God thrust away such wretches from his everlasting presence, who so abhor his ways and him! Can they blame him for denying them the things which they hate, or set so light by, as to prefer a lust before them? If they were not haters of God and holiness, they would never be so averse even to the delights which they should have with him.

Direct. VIII. 'Take heed of a melancholy habit of body:'—for melancholy people can scarce delight in any thing at all, and therefore not in God. Delight is as hard to them, as it is to a pained member to find pleasure, or a sick stomach to delight in the food which it loathes. They

can think of God with trouble, and fear, and horror, and despair; but not with delight.

Direct. ix. 'Take heed of an impatient, peevish, self-tormenting mind, that can bear no cross; and of overvaluing of earthly things, which causeth impatience in the want of them. Make not too great a matter of fleshly pain or pleasure.'—Otherwise your minds will be called to a close attendance on the flesh, and taken up with continual desires, or cares, or fears, or griefs, or pleasures; and will not be permitted to solace themselves with God. The soul that would have pure and high delights, must abstract itself from the concernments of the flesh; and look on your body, as if it were the body of another, whose pain and pleasure you can choose whether you will feel. When Paul was rapt up into the third heaven, and saw the things unutterable, he was so far freed from the prison of sense, that he knew not whether he was in the body, or out of it. As the separated souls, that see the face of God and the Redeemer, do leave the body to be buried, and to rot in darkness, and feel not all this to the interrupting of their joys; so faith can imitate such a death to the world, and such a neglect of the flesh, and some kind of elevating separation of the mind, to the things above. If in this near conjunction you cannot leave the body to rejoice or suffer alone, yet, as itself is but a servant to the soul, so let not its pain or pleasure be predominant, and control the high operations of the soul. A manly, valiant, believing soul, though it cannot abate the pain at all, nor reconcile the flesh to its calamity, yet it can do more, notwithstanding the pain, to its own delight, than strangers will believe.

Some women, and passionate, weak-spirited men, especially in sickness, are so peevish, and of such impatient minds, that their daily work is to disquiet and torment themselves. One can scarce tell how to speak to them, or look at them, but it offendeth them. And the world is so full of occasions of provocation, that such persons are like to have little quietness. It is unlike that these should delight in God, who keep their minds in a continual, ulcerated, galled state, incapable of any delights at all, and cease not their self-tormenting.

Direct. x. 'It is only a life of faith, that will be a life of

holy, heavenly delight: exercise yourselves, therefore, in believing contemplations of the things unseen.'—It must not be now and then a glance of the eye of the soul towards God, or a seldom salutation, which you would give a stranger; but a walking with him, and frequent addresses of the soul unto him, which must help you to the delights which believers find in their communion with him.

Direct. xi. 'Especially let faith go frequently to heaven for renewed matter of delight, and frequently think what God will be to you there for ever, and with what full, everlasting delight he will satiate your souls.'—As heaven is the place of our full delight, so the foresight and foretaste of it, is the highest delight, which on earth is to be attained. And a soul that is strange to the foresight of heaven, will be as strange to the true delights of faith.

Direct. xii. 'It is a great advantage to holy delight, to be much in the more delightful parts of worship; as in thanksgiving and praise, and a due celebration of the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ.'—Of which I have spoken in the foregoing Directions.

Direct. xiii. 'A skilful, experienced pastor, who is able to open the treasury of the Gospel, and publicly and privately to direct his flock in the work of self-examination, and the heavenly exercises of faith, is a great help to Christians' spiritual delight.'—The experiences of believers teach them this: How oft do they go away refreshed and revived, who came to the assembly, or to their pastors in great distress, and almost in despair^k? It is the office and delight of the ministers of Christ, to be "helpers of his people's faith and joy^l."

Direct. xiv. 'Make use of all that prosperity and lawful pleasure, which God giveth you in outward things, for the increase and advantage of your delight in God.'—Though corrupted nature is apter to abuse prosperity and earthly delights, than any other state, to the diverting of the heart from God; and almost all the devil's poison is given in sugared or gilded allectives; yet the primitive, natural use of prosperity, of health, and plenty, and honour, and peace, is to lead up the mind to God, and give us a taste of his spiritual delights! That the neighbourhood of the body might be

^k See Job xxxiii. 23. 2 Cor. i. 3, 4.

^l 2 Cor. i. 24. Phil. i. 4. 25. 1 Thes. ii. 20.

the soul's advantage; and that God, who in this life will be seen by us but in a glass, and will give out his comforts by his appointed means, might make advantage of sensitive delights, for his own reception, and the communications of his love and pleasure unto man: that, as soon as the eye, or ear, or taste, perceiveth the delightfulness of their several objects, the holy soul might presently take the hint and motion, and be carried up to delightful thoughts of him that giveth us all these delights. And, doubtless, so far as we can make use of a delight in friends, or food, or health, or habitations, or any accommodations of our bodies, to further our delight in God, or to remove those melancholy fears or sorrows, which would hinder this spiritual delight, it is not only lawful, but our duty to use them, with that moderation as tendeth to this end.

Direct. xv. 'Make use of affliction, as a great advantage for your purest and unmixed delight in God.'—The servants of Christ have usually never so much of the joy in the Holy Ghost, as in their greatest sufferings: especially if they be for his sake. The soul never retireth so readily and delightfully to God, as when it hath no one else that will receive it, or that it can take any comfort from. God comforteth us most, when he hath made us see that none else can or will relieve us. When all friends have forsaken us save only one, that one is sweeter to us then than ever. When all our house is fired down except one room, that room is pleasanter to us than it was before. He that hath lost one eye, will love the other better than before. In prosperity our delights in God are too often corrupted by a mixture of sensual delight: but all that remaineth when the creature is gone, is purely divine.

Direct. xvi. 'Labour by self-examination, deliberately managed under the direction of an able spiritual guide, to settle your souls in the well-grounded persuasion of your special interest in God and heaven: and then suffer not Satan, by his troublesome importunity, to renew your doubts, or molest your peace.'—An orderly, well-guided, diligent, self-examination, may quickly do much to shew you your condition: and if you are convinced that the truth of grace is in you, let not fears and suspicion go for reason, and cause you to deny that which you cannot, without the gain-

saying of your consciences, deny. You see not the design of the devil in all this: his business is by making you fear, that you have no interest in God, to destroy your delight in him, and in his service: and next that, to make you, through weariness, forsake him; and either despair, or turn to sensual delights. Foresee and prevent these designs of satan, and suffer him not at his pleasure to raise new storms of fears and troubles, and draw you to deny your Father's mercies, or to suspect his proved love.

Direct. xvii. 'Damp not your delights by wilful sin.'—If you grieve your Comforter, he will grieve you, or leave you to grieve yourselves. In that measure that any known sin is cherished, delight in God will certainly decay.

Direct. xviii. 'Improve your observation of wicked men's sensual delights, to provoke your souls to delight in God.'—Think with yourselves; shall hawks, and hounds, and pride, and filthiness, and cards, and dice, and plays, and sports, and luxury, and idleness, and foolish talk, or worldly honours, be so delightful to these deluded sinners, and shall not my God and Saviour, his love and promises, and the hopes of heaven, be more delightful to me? Is there any comparison between the matter of my delights and theirs?

Direct. xix. 'Labour to overcome those fears of death, which would damp your joys in the foresight of everlasting joys.'—As nothing more feedeth holy delights than the forethoughts of heaven; so there is scarce any thing that more hindereth our delight in those forethoughts, than the fear of interposing death. See what I have written against this fear, in my "Treatise of Self-denial," and "Saints' Rest," and in my "Treatise of Death, as the last Enemy," and in my "Last Work of a Believer."

Direct. xx. 'Pretend not any other religious duties, against your delight in God and holiness; but use them all in their proper subserviency to this.'—Penitent sorrow is only a purge to cast out those corruptions which hinder you from relishing your spiritual delights. Use it therefore as physic, only when there is need; and not for itself, but only to this end; and turn it not into your ordinary food. Delight in God is the health of your souls: say not you cannot have while to be healthful, because you must take

physic, or that you take physic against health, or instead of health, but for your health. So take up no sorrow against your delight in God, or instead of it, but for it, and so much as promoteth it. See the Directions for love foregoing.

By this time you may see, that holy delight adjoined to love, is the principal part of our religion, and that they mistake it which place it in any thing else. And therefore how inexcusable are all the ungodly enemies or neglecters of a holy life. If it had been a life of grief and toil, they had had some pretence ; but to fly from pleasure, and refuse delight, and such delight, is inexcusable. Be it known to you, sinners, God calleth you not to forsake delight, but to accept it : to change your delight in sin and vanity, for delight in him. You dare not say but this is better : you cannot have your houses and lands for ever, nor your lust and luxury for ever, but you may have God for ever. And do you hope to live for ever with him, and have you no delight in him ? Men deal with Christ as the Papists with the reformed churches : because we reject their formalities and ceremonious toys, they say we take down all religion. So because we would call men from their brutish pleasures, they say we would let them have no pleasure : for the epicure thinks, when his luxury, lust, and sport are gone, all is gone. Call a sluggard from his bed, or a glutton from his feast, to receive a kingdom, and he will grudge, if he observe only what you would take from him, and not what you give him in its stead. When earthly pleasures end in misery, then who would not wish they had preferred the holy, durable delights ?

Grand Direct. xiv. ‘ Let Thankfulness to God thy Creator, Redeemer, and Regenerator, be the very temperament of thy soul, and faithfully expressed by thy tongue and life.’

Though our thankfulness is no benefit to God, yet he is pleased with it, as that which is suitable to our condition, and sheweth the ingenuity and honesty of the heart. An unthankful person is but a devourer of mercies, and a grave to bury them in, and one that hath not the wit and honesty to know and acknowledge the hand that giveth them ; but the thankful looketh above himself, and returneth all, as he is able, to him from whom they flow.

True thankfulness to God is discerned from counterfeit, by these qualifications: 1. True thankfulness having a just estimate of mercies comparatively, preferreth spiritual and everlasting mercies, before those that are merely corporal and transitory. But carnal thankfulness chiefly valueth carnal mercies, though notionally it may confess that the spiritual are the greater. 2. True thankfulness inclineth the soul to a spiritual rejoicing in God, and to a desire after more of his spiritual mercies: but carnal thankfulness is only a delight in the prosperity of the flesh, or the delusion and carnal security of the mind, inclining men to carnal, empty mirth, and to a desire of more such fleshly pleasure, plenty, or content: as a beast that is full fed, will skip, and play, and shew that he is pleased with his state: or if he have ease, he would not be molested. 3. True thankfulness kindleth in the heart, a love to the giver above the gift, or at least a love to God above our carnal prosperity and pleasure, and bringeth the heart still nearer unto God, by all his mercies. But carnal thankfulness doth spring from carnal self-love, or love of fleshly prosperity; and is moved by it, and is subservient to it, and loveth God and thanketh him but so far as he gratifieth or satisfieth the flesh. A childlike thankfulness maketh us love our Father more than his gift, and desire to be with him, in his arms; but a dog doth love you and is thankful to you, but for feeding him: he loveth you in subordination to his appetite and his bones. 4. True thankfulness inclineth us to obey and please him, that obligeth us by his benefits. But carnal thankfulness puts God off with the hypocritical, complimentary thanks of the lips, and spends the mercy in the pleasing of the flesh, and makes it but the fuel of lust and sin. 5. True thankfulness to God is necessarily transcendent, as his mercies are transcendent. The saving of our souls from hell, and promising us eternal life, besides the giving us our very beings and all that we have, do oblige us to be totally and absolutely his, that is so transcendent a benefactor to us, and causeth the thankful person to devote and resign himself, and all that he hath to God, to answer so great an obligation. But carnal thankfulness falls short of this absolute and total dedication, and still leaveth the sinner in the power of self-love, devoting himself (really) to himself, and

using all that he is, or hath, to the pleasing of his fleshly mind, and giving God only the tithes or leavings of the flesh, or so much as it can spare, lest he should stop the streams of his benignity, and bereave the flesh of its prosperity and contents.

Directions for Thankfulness to God, our Benefactor.

Direct. 1. 'Understand well how great this duty is, in the nature of the thing, but especially how the very design and tenor of the Gospel, and the way of our salvation by a Redeemer, bespeaketh it as the very complexion of the soul, and of every duty.'—A creature that is wholly his Creator's, and is preserved every moment by him, and daily fed and maintained by his bounty, and is put into a capacity of life eternal, must needs be obliged to incessant gratitude. And unthankfulness among men is justly taken for an unnatural, monstrous vice, which forfeiteth the benefits of friendship and society. The "unthankful" are numbered with the "unholy^m," &c., as part of the monsters which should come in the last times, (and which we have lived to see, exactly answering that large description of them.) But the design of God in the work of redemption, is purposely laid for the raising of the highest thankfulness in man: and the Covenant of Grace containeth such abundant, wondrous mercies, as might compel the souls of men to gratitude, or leave them utterly without excuse. It is a great truth, and much to be considered, that gratitude is that general duty of the Gospel, which containeth and animateth all the rest, as being essential to all that is properly evangelical. A law, as a law, requireth obedience as the general duty: and this obedience is to be exercised and found in every particular duty which it requireth. And the covenant with the Jews was called, 'The Law,' because the regulating part was most eminent: and so obedience was the thing that was eminently required by the law, though their measure of mercy obliged them also to thankfulness. But the Gospel or New Covenant is most eminently a history of mercy, and a tender and promise of the most unmatched benefits that ever were heard of by the ears of man: so that the gift of mercy is the pre-

dominant or eminent part in the Gospel or New Covenant: and though still, God be our Governor, and the New Covenant also hath its precepts, and is a law, yet that is, in a sort, but the subservient part. And what obedience is to a law, that thankfulness is to a benefit, even the formal answering of its obligation: so that though we are called to as exact obedience as ever, yet it is now only a thankful obedience that we are called to. And just as law and promises or gifts are conjoined in the New Covenant, just so should obedience and thankfulness be conjoined in our hearts and lives; one to God as our Ruler, and the other to him as our Benefactor: and these two must animate every act of heart and life. We must repent of sin; but it must be a thankful repenting, as becometh those that have a free pardon of all their sins procured by the blood of Christ, and offered them in the Gospel: leave out this gratitude, and it is no evangelical repentance. And what is our saving faith in Christ, but the assent to the truth of the Gospel, with a thankful acceptance of the good which it offereth us, even Christ as our Saviour, with the benefits of his redemption. The love to God that is there required, is the thankful love of his redeemed ones: and the love to our very enemies, and the forgiving of wrongs, and all the love to one another, and all the works of charity there required, are the exercises of gratitude, and are all to be done, on this account, because Christ hath loved us, and forgiven us, and that we may shew our thankful love to him. Preaching, and praying, and sacraments, and public praises, and communion of saints, and obedience, are all to be animated with gratitude; and they are no further evangelically performed, than thankfulness is the very life and complexion of them all. The dark and defective opening of this by preachers, gave occasion to the Antinomians to run into the contrary extreme, and to derogate too much from God's law and our obedience: but if we obscure the doctrine of evangelical gratitude, we do as bad or worse than they. Obedience to our Ruler, and thankfulness to our Benefactor, conjoined and co-operating as the head and heart in the natural body, do make a Christian indeed. Understand this well, and it will much incline your hearts to thankfulness.

Direct. II. ' Let the greatness of the manifold mercies of

God, be continually before your eyes.'—Thankfulness is caused by the due apprehension of the greatness of mercies. If you either know them not to be mercies, or know not that they are mercies to you, or believe not what is said and promised in the Gospel, or forget them, or think not of them, or make light of them through the corruption of your minds, you cannot be thankful for them. I have before spoken of mercy in order to the kindling of love, and therefore shall now only recite these following, to be always in your memories. 1. The love of God in giving you a Redeemer, and the love of Christ in giving his life for us, and in all the parts of our redemption. 2. The covenant of grace, the pardon of all our sins: the justification of our persons: our adoption, and title to eternal life. 3. The aptness of means for calling us to Christ: the gracious and wise disposals of Providence to that end: the gifts and compassion of our instructors; the care of parents: and the helps and examples of the servants of Christ. 4. The efficacy of all these means: the giving us to will and to do, and opening of our hearts, and giving us repentance unto life, and the Spirit of Christ to mortify our sins, and purify our nature, and dwell within us. 5. A standing in his church, under the care of faithful pastors: the liberty, comfort, and frequent benefit of his Word and sacraments, and the public communion of his saints. 6. The company of those that fear the Lord, and their faithful admonitions, reproofs, and encouragements: the kindness they have shewed us for body, or for soul. 7. The mercies of our relations, or habitations, our estates, and the notable alterations and passages of our lives. 8. The manifold preservations and deliverances of our souls, from errors and seducers: from terrors and distress: from dangerous temptations, and many a soul-wounding sin: and that we are not left to the errors and desires of our hearts, to seared consciences, as forsaken of God. 9. The manifold deliverances of our bodies from enemies, hurts, distresses, sicknesses, and death. 10. The mercies of adversity, in wholesome, necessary chastisements, or honourable sufferings for his sake, and support or comfort under all. 11. The communion which our souls have had with God, in the course of our private and public duties, in prayer, sacraments, and meditation. 12. The use which he hath made

of us for the good of others : that our time hath not been wholly lost, and we have not lived as burdens of the world.

13. The mercies of all our friends and his servants, which were to us as our own ; and our interest in the mercies and public welfare of his church, which are more than our own.

14. His patience and forbearance with us under our constant unprofitableness and provocations, and his renewed mercies notwithstanding our abuse : our perseverance until now. 15. Our hopes of everlasting rest and glory, when this sinful life is at an end. Aggravate these mercies in your more enlarged meditations, and they will sure constrain you to cry out, “ Bless the Lord, O my soul : and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits ; who forgiveth all thine iniquities ; who healeth all thy diseases ; who redeemeth thy life from destruction ; who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies^a.” “ Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise ; be thankful unto him, and bless his name. For the Lord is good ; his mercy is everlasting ; and his truth endureth to all generations^b.” “ The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him^c.” “ O give thanks unto the Lord ; for he is good ; for his mercy endureth for ever^d.” “ O give thanks unto the Lord ; call upon his name ; make known his deeds among the people. Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him ; talk ye of all his wondrous works. Glory ye in his holy name : let the heart of them rejoice that seek him^e.”

Direct. III. ‘ Be well acquainted with the greatness of your sins, and sensible of them as they are the aggravation of God’s mercies to you.’—This is the main end why God will humble those that he will save ; not to drive them to despair of mercy, nor that he taketh pleasure in their sorrows for themselves ; but to work the heart to a due esteem of saving mercy, and to a serious desire after it, that they may thankfully receive it, and carefully retain it, and faithfully use it. An unhumbled soul sets light by Christ, and grace, and glory : it relisheth no spiritual mercy : it cannot

^a Psal. ciii. 1—4.

^b Psal. c. 4, 5.

^c Psal. ciii. 8. 11.

^d Psal. cxxxvi. 1, &c.

^e Psal. cv. 1—3.

be thankful for that which it findeth no great need of. But true humiliation recovereth our appetite and teacheth us to value mercy as it is. Think, therefore, what sin is, (as I have opened to you, Direct. viii.) and think of your manifold, aggravated sins: and then think how great those mercies are that are bestowed on so great, unworthy sinners! Then mercy will melt your humbled hearts, when you confess that you are “unworthy to be called sons^a,” and that you are unworthy to look up to heaven^b, and that you are “not worthy of the least of all the mercies of God^c.” The humbled soul is the thankful soul, and therefore so greatly valued by the Lord.

Direct. iv. ‘Understand what misery you were delivered from, and estimate the greatness of the mercy by the greatness of the punishment which you had deserved.’—Misery as well as sin must tell us the greatness of our mercies. This is before opened, Chap. i. Direct. ix.

Direct. v. ‘Suppose you saw the damned souls, or suppose you had been one day in hell yourselves, bethink you then how thankful you would have been for Christ and mercy.’—And you were condemned to it by the law of God, and if death had brought you to execution you had been there, and then mercy would have been more esteemed. If a preacher were sent to those miserable souls to offer them a pardon and eternal life on the terms as they are offered to us, do you think they would make as light of it as we do?

Direct. vi. ‘Neglect not to keep clear of the evidences of thy title to those especial mercies, for which thou shouldst be most thankful: and hearken not to satan when he would tempt thee to think that they are none of thine, that so he might make thee deny God the thanks for them which he expecteth.’—Of this I have spoken in the Directions for Love.

Direct. vii. ‘Think much of those personal mercies which God hath shewed thee from thy youth up until now, by which he hath manifested his care of thee, and particular kindness to thee.’—Though the common mercies of God’s servants be the greatest, which all other Christians share in with each one; yet personal favours peculiar to ourselves

^a Luke xv.^b Luke xviii. 13.^c Gen. xxxii. 10

are apt much to affect us, as being near our apprehension; and expressing a peculiar care and love of us. Therefore Christians should mark God's dealings with them, and write down the great and notable mercies of their lives (which are not unfit for others to know, if they should see it).

Direct. viii. 'Compare thy proportion of mercies with the rest of the people's in the world; and thou wilt find that it is not one of many thousands that hath thy proportion.'—It is so small a part of the world that are Christians, and of those so few that are orthodox, reformed Christians; and of those so few that are seriously godly as devoted to God; and of those so few that fall not into some perplexities, errors, scandals, or great afflictions and distress, that those few that are in none of these ranks have cause of wondrous thankfulness to God: yea, the most afflicted Christians in the world. Suppose God had divided his mercies equally to all men in the world, as health, and wealth, and honour, and grace, and the Gospel, &c. how little of them would have come to thy share in comparison of what thou now possessest? how many have less wealth or honour than thou? how many thousands have less of the Gospel and of grace? In reason therefore thy thankfulness should be proportionable and extraordinary.

Direct. ix. 'Compare the mercies which thou wantest with those which thou possessest, and observe how much thy receivings are greater than thy sufferings.'—Thou hast many meals plenty, for one day of scarcity or pinching hunger; thou hast many days health for one day's sickness: and if one part be ill, there are more that are not; if one cross befall thee, thou escapest many more that might befall thee, and which thou deservest.

Direct. x. 'Bethink thee how thou wouldst value thy mercies, if thou wert deprived of them.'—The want of them usually teacheth us most effectually to esteem them. Think how thou shouldst value Christ and hope, if thou wert in despair? and how thou wouldst value the mercies of earth, if thou wert in hell? and the mercies of England, if thou wert among bloody inquisitors and persecutors, and wicked, cruel Heathens or Mahometans, or brutish, savage Americans. Think how good sleep would seem to thee, if

thou couldst not sleep for pains ; or how good thy meat, or drink, or clothes, or house, or maintenance, or friends, would all seem to thee, if they were taken from thee ; and how great a mercy health would seem, if thou wert under some tormenting sickness ; and what a mercy time would seem, if death were at hand, and time were ending ; and what a mercy thy least sincere desires, or measure of grace is, in comparison of their case, that are the haters, despisers and persecutors of holiness. These thoughts, if followed home, may shame thee into thankfulness.

Direct. XI. ‘ Let heaven be ever in thine eye, and still think of the endless joy which thou shalt have with Christ.’ —For that is the mercy of all mercies ; and he that hath not that in hope to be thankful for will never be thankful aright for any thing ; and he that hath heaven in promise to be thankful for hath still reason for the highest, joyful thanks, whatever worldly thing he want, or though he were sure never more to have comfort in any creature upon earth. He is unthankful indeed, that will not be thankful for heaven ; but that is a mercy which will constrain to thankfulness, so far as our title is discerned. The more believing and heavenly the mind is, the more thankful.

Direct. XII. ‘ Look on earthly and present mercies in connection with heaven which is their end, and as sweetened by our interest in God that giveth them.’ —You leave out all the life and sweetness, which must cause your thankfulness, if you leave out God and overlook him. A dead carcase hath not the loveliness or usefulness as a living man. You mortify your mercies, when you separate them from God and heaven, and then their beauty, and sweetness, and excellency are gone ; and how can you be thankful for the husks and shells, when you foolishly neglect the kernel ? Take every bit as from thy Father’s hands : remember that he feedeth, and clotheth, and protecteth thee, as his child : it is to “ Our Father which is in heaven,” that we must go every day for our “ daily bread.” Taste his love in it, and thou wilt say that it is sweet. Remember whither all his mercies tend, and where they will leave thee, even in the bosom of Eternal Love. Think with thyself, how good is this with the love of God ! this and heaven are full enough for me. Coarse fare, and coarse cloathing, and coarse usage

in the world, and hard labour, and a poor habitation, with heaven after all, is mercy beyond all human estimation or conceiving. Nothing can be little, which is a token of the love of God, and leadeth to eternal glory. The relation to heaven is the life and glory of mercy.

Direct. XIII. 'Think oft how great a mercy it is, that thankfulness for mercy is made so great a part of thy duty.'—Is it not the sweetest employment in the world to be always thinking on so sweet a thing as the mercies of God, and to be mentioning them with glad and thankful hearts? Is not this a sweeter kind of work than to be abusing mercy, and casting it away upon fleshly lusts, and sinning it away, and turning it against us? Yea, is it not a sweeter work than to be groaning under sin and misery? If God had as much fixed your thoughts upon saddening, heart-breaking objects, as he hath (by his commands) upon reviving and delightful objects, you might have thought religion a melancholy life. But when sorrow is required but as preparatory to delight, and cheerful thanksgiving is made the life and sum of your religion, who but a monster will think it grievous to live in thankfulness to our great Benefactor? To think thus of the sweetness of it will do much to incline us to it, and make it easy to us.

Direct. XIV. 'Make conscience ordinarily of allowing God's mercies as great a room in thy thoughts and prayers, as thou allowest to thy sins, and wants, and troubles.'—In a day of humiliation, or after some notable fall into sin, or in some special cases of distress, I confess sin and danger may have the greater share. But, ordinarily, mercy should take up more time in our remembrance and confession than our sins. Let the reasons of it first convince you, that this is your duty; and, when you are convinced, hold yourselves to the performance of it. If you cannot be so thankful as you desire, yet spend as much time in the confessing of God's mercy to you, as in confessing your sins and mentioning your wants. Thanksgiving is an effectual petitioning for more: it sheweth that the soul is not drowned in selfishness, but would carry the fruit of all his mercies back to God. If you cannot think on mercy so thankfully as you would, yet see that it have a due proportion of your thoughts. This course (of allowing mercy its due time in

our thoughts and prayers) would work the soul to greater thankfulness by degrees. Whereas, on the contrary, when men accustom themselves to have ten words or twenty of confession and petition for one of thanksgiving, and ten thoughts of sins, and wants, and troubles, for one of mercies, this starveth thankfulness and turneth it out of doors. You can command your words and thoughts if you will; resolve, therefore, on this duty.

Direct. xv. 'Take heed of a proud, a covetous, a fleshly, or a discontented mind; for all these are enemies to thankfulness.'—A proud heart thinks itself the worthiest for more, and thinks dimunitively of all. A covetous heart is still gaping after more, and never returning the fruit of what it hath received. A fleshly mind is an insatiable gulph of corporal mercies; like a greedy dog that is gaping for another bone when he hath devoured one, and sacrificeth all to his belly which is his God. A discontented mind is always murmuring and never pleased, but findeth something still to quarrel at; and taketh more notice of the denying of its unjust desires, than of the giving of many undeserved mercies. Thankfulness prospereth not, where these vices prosper.

Direct. xvi. 'Avoid as much as may be a melancholy and over-fearful temper; for that will not suffer you to see or taste your greatest mercies, nor to be glad or thankful for any thing you have, but is still representing all things to you in a terrible or lamentable shape.'—The grace of thankfulness may be habitually in a timorous, melancholy mind: and that appeareth in their valuation of the mercy. How glad and thankful would they be, if they were assured that the love of God is towards them? But it is next to impossible for them, ordinarily, to exercise thankfulness, because they cannot believe any thing of themselves that is good and comfortable. It is as natural for them to be still fearing, and despairing, and complaining, and troubling themselves, as for froward children to be crying, or sick men to groan. Befriend not therefore this miserable disease, but resist it by all due remedies.

Direct. xvii. 'Take heed of unthankful doctrines, which teach you to deny or undervalue mercy.'—Such is, 1. The doctrine of the Pelagians, (whom Prosper calleth the Un-

grateful,) that denied faith and special grace to be any special gift of God ; and that teach you, that Peter is no more beholden to God than Judas, for his differencing grace. 2. The doctrine which denieth general grace, (which is presupposed unto special,) and tells the world, that Christ died only for the elect, and that all the mercy of the Gospel is confined to them alone ; and teacheth all men to deny God any thanks for Christ or any Gospel mercy, till they know that they are elect and justified ; and would teach the wicked (on earth and in hell), that they ought not to accuse themselves for sinning against any Gospel mercy, or for rejecting a Christ that died for them. 3. All doctrine which makes God the physical, efficient predeterminer of every act of the creature considered in all its circumstances ; and so tells you, that saving grace is no more, nor any otherwise caused of God, than sin and every natural act is ; and our thanks that we owe him for keeping us from sin is but for not irresistible premoving us to it. Such doctrines cut the veins of thankfulness ; and being not doctrines according to godliness, the life of grace, and spiritual sense of believers are against them.

Direct. xviii. “ Put not God off with verbal thanks, but give him thyself and all thou hast.”—Thankfulness causeth the soul to inquire, “ What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me^x ?” And it is no less than thyself and all thou hast that thou must render ; that is, thou must give God not only thy tithes, and the sacrifice of Cain, but thyself to be entirely his servant, and all that thou hast to be at his command, and used in the order that he would have thee use it. A thankful soul devoteth itself to God ; this is the “ living, acceptable sacrifice^y.” It studieth how to do him service, and how to do good with all his mercies. Thankfulness is a powerful spring of obedience, and makes men long to be fruitful and profitable, and glad of opportunities to be serviceable to God. Thus law and Gospel, obedience and gratitude concur. A thankful obedience and an obedient thankfulness are a Christian’s life. “ Offer unto God thanksgiving ; and pay thy vows to the Most High : and call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me. Whoso offer-

^x Psal. cxvi. 12.

^y Rom. xii. 1.

eth praise glorifieth me ; and to him that ordereth his conversation aright, I will shew the salvation of God^a.”

I beseech thee now that readest these lines, be so true to God, be so ingenuous, be so much a friend to the comfort of thy soul, and so much love a life of pleasure, as to set thyself for the time to come to a more conscionable performance of this noble work ; and steep thy thoughts in the abundant mercies of thy God, and express them more in all thy speech to God and man. Say as David, “ O Lord, truly I am thy servant ; thou hast loosed my bonds. I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord^a.” “ I will extol thee, O Lord, for thou hast lifted me up, and hast not made my foes to rejoice over me. O Lord my God, I cried unto thee, and thou hast healed me. O Lord, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave ; thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit. Sing unto the Lord, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness. Thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness ; to the end that my glory may sing praise to thee, and not be silent. O Lord my God, I will give thanks to thee for ever^b.” “ I will praise the name of God with a song, and magnify him with thanksgiving. This also shall please the Lord better than an ox^c.” “ It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O Most High ; to shew forth thy loving-kindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night^d.” At midnight will I rise to give thanks unto thee, because of thy righteous judgments^e.” “ Surely the righteous shall give thanks unto thy name ; the upright shall dwell in thy presence^f.” Remember that you are commanded, “ in every thing to give thanks^g.” When God is scanty in mercy to thee then be thou scanty in thankfulness to him ; and not when the devil, and a forgetful, or unbelieving, or discontented heart, would hide his greatest mercies from thee. It is just with God to give up that person to sadness of heart, and to uncomfortable, self-tormenting melancholy, that will

^a Psal. l. 14, 15. 23.^a Psal. cxvi. 16, 17.^b Psal. xxx. 1—4. 11, 12.^c Psal. lxix. 30, 31.^d Psal. xcii. 1, 2.^e Psal. cxix. 62.^f Psal. cxl. 13.^g 1 Thess. v. 18.

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“ That God in all things might be glorified

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I shall therefore first shew

and then give directions how

To glorify God is not to add to his essential perfections,

or felicity, or real glory. The glory of God is a word that

is taken in these various senses : 1. Sometimes it signifieth

the essential, transcendent excellencies of God in himself

considered ; so Rom. vi. 4. Psal. xix. 2. 2. Sometimes it

signifieth that glory which the angels and saints behold in

heaven : what this is, a soul in flesh cannot formally con-

ceive or comprehend. It seemeth not to be the essence of

God, because that is every where, and so is not that glory ;

or if any think that his essence is that glory, and is every

where alike, and that the creature's capacity is all the dif-

ference betwixt heaven and earth, he seems confuted in that

the glory of heaven will be seen by the glorified body itself,

which it is thought cannot see the essence of God. Whe-

ther, then, that glory be the essence of God, or any imme-

mediate emanation from his excellency, as the beams and light

that are sent forth by the sun, or a created glory for the fe-

licity of his servants, we shall know when with the blessed

we enjoy it. 3. Sometimes it is taken for the appearance of

God's perfections in his creatures, either natural or free

agents, as discerned by man, and for his honour in the

esteem of man. John xi. 4. 40. 1 Cor. xi. 7. 2 Cor. iv. 15.

Phil. i. 11. ii. 11. Isa. xxxv. 2. xl. 5, &c. And so to

^h 1 Cor. x. 31.

ⁱ 1 Pet. iv. 11.

God is, 1. Objectively, to represent his excellencies
 joy; 2. Mentally, to conceive of them; 3. and Ver-
 ally, to declare them. I shall therefore distinctly direct
 you, 1. How to glorify God in your minds. 2. By your
 tongues. 3. By your lives.

Directions for glorifying God with the Heart.

Direct. I. ‘ Abhor all blasphemous representations and thoughts of God, and think not of him lamely, unequally, or diminutively, nor as under any corporeal shape; nor think to comprehend him, but reverently admire him.’ —Conceive of him as incomprehensible and infinite: and if **satan** would tempt thee to think meanly of any thing in **God**, or to think highly of one of his perfections, and meanly of another, abhor such temptations; and think of his power, knowledge, and goodness, equally as the infinite perfections of God ^k.

Direct. II. ‘ Behold his glory in the glory of his works of nature and of grace, and see him in all as the soul, the glory, the all of the whole creation.’ —What a power is that which made and preserveth all the world! What a wisdom is that which set in joint the universal frame of heaven and earth, and keepeth all things in their order. How good is he that made all good, and gave the creatures all their goodness, both natural and spiritual, by creation and renewing grace! Thus “the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy-work^l.” His glory covereth the heavens, and the earth is full of his praise^m. “The voice of the Lord is upon the waters; the God of glory thunderethⁿ.”

Direct. III. ‘ Behold him in the person, miracles, resurrection, dominion, and glory of his blessed Son:’ —“who is the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person; upholding all things by the word of his power, and having by himself purged our sins, sat down at the right-hand of the Majesty on high, being made better than the angels^o.” “By him” it is that “glory is given to God in the church^p.” “God hath highly exalted him, and given

^k Lege Gassendi Oration. inaugural. in Institut. Astronom.

^l Psal. xix. 1.

^m Hab. iii. 3.

ⁿ Psal. xxix. 3. cxlv.

^o Heb. i. 3, 4.

^p Eph. iii. 21.

him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father^a.” “Pray,” therefore, that the “God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the acknowledgment of him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his right hand in the celestials, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be Head over all things to the church^r.” “The Father hath glorified his name in his Son^s.”

Direct. iv. ‘Behold God as the end of the whole creation, and intend him as the end of all the actions of thy life.’—You honour him not as God, if you practically esteem him not as your ultimate end; even the pleasing of his will, and the honouring him in the world. If any thing else be made your chiefest end you honour it before him, and make a god of it.

Direct. v. ‘Answer all his blessed attributes with suitable affections, (as I have directed in my “Treatise of the Knowledge of God,” and here briefly *Direct.* iv.) and his relations to us with the duty which they command,’ subjection, love, &c.) as I have opened in the foregoing Directions. We glorify him in our hearts, when the image of his attributes is there received.

Direct. vi. ‘Behold him by faith as always present with you.’—And then every attribute will the more affect you, and you will not admit dishonourable thoughts of him: pray to him as if you saw him, and you will speak to him with reverence. Speak of him, as if you saw him,

^a Phil. ii. 9—11.

^r Eph. i. 17, &c.

^s John xii. 28. xiii. 41, 32. xiv. 13. xvii. 1.

and you dare not take his name in vain, nor talk of God with a common frame of mind, nor in a common manner; as of common things. “By faith Moses forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing Him that is invisible[†].” God is contemned by them that think they are behind his back.

Direct. VII. ‘Think of him as in heaven where he is revealed in glory to the blessed, and magnified by their high, everlasting praise.’—Nothing so much helpeth us to glorify God in our minds, as by faith to behold him where he is glorious. The very reading over the description of the glory of the New Jerusalem, Rev. xxi. and xxii. will much affect a believing mind with a sense of the gloriousness of God. Suppose, with Stephen, we saw heaven opened, and the Ancient of Days, the great Jehovah gloriously illustrating the city of God, and Jesus in glory at his right-hand, and the innumerable army of glorified spirits before his throne, praising and magnifying him with the highest admirations, and joyfulest acclamations that creatures are capable of, would it not raise us to some of the same admirations? The soul that by faith is much above doth most glorify God, as being nearest to his glory.

Direct. VIII. ‘Foresee by faith the coming of Christ, and the day of the universal judgment, when Christ shall come in flaming fire with thousands of his holy angels, to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that do believe[‡].’

Direct. IX. ‘Abhor all doctrines which blaspheme or dishonour the name of God, and would blemish and hide the glory of his Majesty.’—I give you this rule for your own preservation, and not in imitation of uncharitable firebrands and dividers of the church, to exercise your pride and imperious humour, in condemning all men, to whose opinions you can maliciously affix a blasphemous consequence, which either followeth but in your own imagination, or is not acknowledged but hated by those on whom you do affix it. Let it suffice you to detest false doctrines, without detesting the persons that you imagine guilty of them, who profess to believe the contrary truth as stedfastly as you yourselves.

[†] Heb. xi. 27.

[‡] 2 Thess. i. 10.

Direct. x. ‘Take heed of sinking into flesh and earth, and being diverted by things sensible from the daily contemplation of the glory of God.’—If your belly become your God, and you mind earthly things, and are set upon the honours, or profits, or pleasures of the world, when your conversation should be in heaven, you will be glorying in your shame, when you should be admiring the glory of your Maker^u, and you will have so much to do on earth, that you will find no leisure (because you have no hearts) to look up seriously to God.

Directions for glorifying God with our Tongues in his Praises.

Direct. i. ‘Conceive of this duty of praising God according to its superlative excellencies, as being the highest service that the tongue of men or angels can perform.’—To bless, or praise, or magnify God is not to make him greater or better, or happier than he is; but to declare and extol his greatness, goodness, and felicity. And that your hearts may be inflamed to this excellent work, I will here shew you how great and necessary, how high and acceptable a work it is.

1. It is the giving to God his chiefest due^x.’ A speaking of him as he is; and when we have spoken the highest, how far fall we short of the due expression of his glorious perfections! O how great praise doth that Almightyness deserve, which createth and conserveth all the world, and over-ruleth all the sons of men, and is able to do whatsoever he will! “Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable. One generation shall praise his works to another and declare his mighty acts: I will speak of the glorious honour of thy Majesty, and of thy wondrous works; and men shall speak of the might of thy terrible acts, and I will declare thy greatness^y.” What praise doth that knowledge deserve which extendeth to all things that are, or were, or ever shall be? and that wisdom that ordereth all the world! He knoweth every thought of man, and

^u Phil. iii. 18—20.

^x Christianus est homo dicens et faciens ingrata diabolo; et ornans gloriam Dei, autoris vitæ et salutis suæ. Bucholtzer.

^y Psal. cxlv. 3—5.

all the secrets of the heart^a. “Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world^a.” “His understanding is infinite^b.” What praise doth that goodness and mercy deserve, which is diffused throughout all the world, and is the life, and hope, and happiness of men and angels! “His mercy is great unto the heavens, and his truth unto the clouds^c.” “O how great is his goodness to them that fear him^d!” And therefore how great should be his praise! “Who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord, and who can shew forth all his praise^e?” “For great is the glory of the Lord^f!”

2. It is the end of all God's wondrous works, and especially the end which man was made for, that all things might praise him objectively, and men (and angels) in estimation and expression. That his glorious excellency might be visible in his works, and be admired and extolled by the rational creature: for this all things were created and are continued: for this we have our understanding and our speech: this is the fruit that God expecteth from all his works. Deny him this, and you are guilty of frustrating the whole creation, as much as in you lieth. You would have the sun to shine in vain, and the heavens and earth to stand in vain, and man and all things to live in vain, if you would not have God have the praise and glory of his works. Therefore, sun, and moon, and stars, and firmament, are called on to praise the Lord^g, as they are the matter for which he must by us be praised. “O praise him therefore for his mighty acts: praise him according to his excellent greatness^h.” “O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and declare his wondrous works for the children of menⁱ.” Yea it is the end of Christ in the redemption of the world, and in saving his elect, that God might, in the church, in earth and heaven, have the “praise and glory of his grace^k.” “By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name^l.” “And let the redeemed of the Lord say, that his mercy endureth for ever^m.” For this, all his

^a Psal. xliv. 21. xciv. 11.^a Acts xv. 18.^b Psal. cxlvii. 5.^c Psal. lvii. 10.^d Psal. xxxi. 10.^e Psal. cvi. 2.^f Psal. cxxxviii. 5.^g Psalm cxlviii. 2—4.^h Psalm cl. 2.ⁱ Psalm cvii. 8.^k Ephes. i. 6. 12. 14.^l Heb. xiii. 15.^m Psalm cvii. 2.

saints “are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that they should shew forth the praises of him that hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light.”

3. The praise of God is the highest and noblest work in itself: (1.) It hath the highest object, even the glorious excellencies of God. Thanksgiving is somewhat lower, as having more respect to ourselves and the benefits received; but praise is terminated directly on the perfections of God himself. (2.) It is that work that is most immediately nearest on God, as he is our end: and as the end, as such, is better than all the means set together, as such, so are the final duties about the end, greater than all the immediate duties. (3.) It is the work of the most excellent creatures of God, the holy angels: they proclaimed the coming of Christ, by way of praise, “Glory to God in the highest: on earth peace: good will towards men^o.” And as we must be equal to the angels, it must be in equal praising God, or else it will not be in equality of glory. (4.) It is the work of heaven, the place and state of all perfection: and that is best and highest which is nearest heaven: where “they rest not day nor night, saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.” “Thou art worthy O Lord to receive glory, and honour, and power, for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.” “A voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluiah: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour unto him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready^p.”

4. It beseemeth us, and much concerneth us, to learn and exercise that work, which in heaven we must do for ever: and that is, to love and joyfully praise the Lord: for earth is but the place of our apprenticeship for heaven. The preparing works of mortifying repentance must in their place be done; but only as subservient to these which we must ever do: when we shall sing the “new song” before

^o Luke ii. 13, 14. Psalm ciii. 20. cxlviii. 2. ^p Rev. iv. 8, 10. xix. 5, 6.

the “Lamb, Thou art worthy;”—“For thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, and hast made us kings and priests unto our God^q.” Therefore the primitive church of believers is described as most like to heaven: “with great joy they were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God^r.” “O praise the Lord therefore in the congregation of the saints: let Israel rejoice in him that made him: let the children of Zion be joyful in their king. Let the saints be joyful in glory: let the high praises of God be in their mouths^s.”

5. Though we are yet diseased sinners, and in our warfare, among enemies, dangers, and perplexities, yet praise is seasonable and suitable to our condition here, as the greatest part of our duty, which all the rest must but promote. Pretend not that it is not fit for you because you are sinners, and that humiliation only is suitable to your state. For the design of your redemption, the tenor of the Gospel, and your own condition, engage you to it. Are they not engaged to praise the Lord, that are brought so near him to that end?—that are reconciled to him?—to whom he hath given and forgiven so much?—that have so many great and precious promises?—that are the temples of the Holy Ghost, who dwelleth in them, and sanctifieth them to God?—that have a Christ interceding for them in the highest?—that are always safe in the arms of Christ;—that are guarded by angels;—and devils, and enemies forbidden to touch them, further than their Father seeth necessary for their good?—that have the Lord for their God?—that have his saints for their companions and helpers?—that have so many ordinances to help their souls; and so many creatures and comforts for their bodies?—that live continually upon the plenty of his love?—that have received so much, and are still receiving? Should we not bless him every day with praise, that blesseth us every day with benefits? Should we not praise the bridge that we go over?—the friend that we have tried so oft? And resolve as Psalm cxlv. “Every day will I bless thee: I will praise thy name for ever and ever.” Psalm lxiii. 3, 4. “Because thy loving kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee: thus will I bless thee while I live:

^q Rev. v. 9, 10.^r Luke xxiv. 53.^s Psalm cxlix. 1, 2, 5, 6.

I will lift up my hands in thy name." Are they not bound to praise him on earth, that must reign with Christ for ever in heaven^t?

6. The praises of God do exercise our highest graces: praise is the very breath of love, and joy, and gratitude: it tendeth to raise us above ourselves, and make our hearts to burn within us, while the glorious name of God is magnified: it hath the most pure, and spiritual, and elevating effect upon the soul; and therefore tendeth most effectually to make us more holy, by the increase of these graces.

7. To be much employed in the praise of God, doth tend exceedingly to the vanquishing all hurtful doubts, and fears, and sorrows. Joy and praise promote each other. And this it doth, (1.) By keeping the soul near to God, and within the warmth of his love and goodness^u. (2.) By the exercise of love and joy, which are the cordial, reviving, strengthening graces^x. (3.) By dissipating distrustful, vexing thoughts, and diverting the mind to sweeter things^y. (4.) By keeping off the tempter, who usually is least able to follow us with his molestations, when we are highest in the praises of our God. (5.) By bringing out the evidences of our sincerity into the light, while the chiefest graces are in exercise^z. (6.) And by way of reward from God, that loveth the praises of his meanest servants. And here I would commend this experiment, to uncomfortable, troubled souls, that have not found comfort by long searching after evidences in themselves. Exercise yourselves much in the praises of God: this is a duty that you have no pretence against. Against thanksgiving for his grace, you pretend that you know not that you have received his grace; but to praise him in the excellency of his perfections, his power and wisdom, and goodness, and mercy, and truth, is the duty of all men in the world. While you are doing this, you will feel your graces stir, and feel that comfort from the face of God, which you are not like to meet with in any other way whatsoever. Evidences are exceeding useful to our ordinary stated peace and comfort; but it is oft long before we confidently discern them: and they are oft dis-

^t Rom. viii. 17. 33. Rev. i. 5, 6. Col. i. 12. 1 Pet. i. 4.

^u sal. cxl. 13.

^x Psal. xciv. 19. cxvi. 1.

^y Psal. civ. 34.

^z 2 Cor. iii. 18.

soured when yet the soul is not excited to much sense of comfort and delight: and we quickly lose the sight of evidences, if we be not very wise and careful. But a life of praise bringeth comfort to the soul, as standing in the sunshine bringeth light and warmth: or as labouring doth warm the body: or as the sight and converse of our dearest friend, or the hearing of glad tidings doth rejoice the heart, without any great reasoning or arguing the case. This is the way to have comfort by feeling, to be much in the hearty praises of the Lord. When we come to heaven we shall have our joy, by immediate vision, and the delightful exercise of love and praise. And if you would taste the heavenly joys on earth, you must imitate them in heaven, as near as possibly you can; and this is your work of nearest imitation.

8. To live a life of praising God, will make religion sweet and easy to us, and take off the wearisomeness of it, and make the work of God a pleasure to us. Whereas they that set themselves only to the works of humiliation, and leave out these soul-delighting exercises, do cast themselves into exceeding danger, by making religion seem to them a grievous and undesirable life. This makes men backward to every duty, and do it heartlessly, and easily yield to temptations of omission and neglect, if not at last fall off through weariness: whereas the soul that is daily employed in the high and holy praises of his God, is still drawn on by encouraging experience, and doth all with a willing, ready mind.

9. No duty is more pleasing to God, than the cheerful praises of his servants. He loveth your prayers, tears, and groans; but your praises much more: and that which pleaseth God most, must be most pleasing to his servants; for to please him is their end: this is the end of all their labour, that "whether present or absent, they may be accepted of him²." So that it is a final enjoying, and therefore a delighting duty.

10. To be much employed in the praises of God, will acquaint the world with the nature of true religion, and remove their prejudice, and confute their dishonourable thoughts and accusations of it, and recover the honour of

² 2 Cor. v. 9.

Christ, and his holy ways, and servants. Many are averse to a holy life, because they think that it consisteth but of melancholy fears or scrupulosity: but who dare open his mouth against the joyful praises of his Maker? I have heard and read of several enemies and murderers, that have broke in upon Christians with an intent to kill them, or carry them away, that finding them on their knees in prayer, and reverencing the work so much as to stay and hear them till they had done, have revered the persons also, and departed, and durst not touch the heavenly worshippers of God. This life of praise is a continual pleasure to the soul; clean contrary to a melancholy life. It is recreating to the spirits, and healthful to the body, which is consumed by cares, and fears, and sorrows. It is the way that yieldeth that "mirth which doth good like a medicine, and is a continual feast^a." Therefore, saith the apostle, "Is any merry, let him sing psalms^b." He cannot better exercise mirth, than in singing praises to his God. This keeps the soul continually on the wing, desiring still to be nearer God, that it may have more of these delights: and so it overcomes the sense of persecutions and afflictions, and the fears of death, and is a most excellent cordial and companion in the greatest sufferings. Was it not an excellent hearing, to have been a witness of the joy of Paul and Silas, when in the prison and stocks, with their backs sore with scourges, they sang at midnight the praises of the Lord^c? so that all the doors were opened, and all the prisoners' bonds were loosed, that had been their auditors; so great was God's acceptance of their work. O that we would do that honour and right to true religion, as to shew the world the nature and use of it, by living in the cheerful praises of our God, and did not teach them to blaspheme it, by our misdoings!

I have said the more of the excellency and benefits of this work, because it is one of your best helps to perform it, to know the reasons of it, and how much of your religion, and duty, and comfort consisteth in it: and the forgetting of this, is the common cause that it is so boldly and ordinarily neglected, or slubbered over as it is.

Direct. 11. 'The keeping of the heart in admiration and

^a Prov. xvii. 22. xv. 15.

^b James v. 13.

^c Acts xvi. 25.

glorifying of God, according to the foregoing Directions, is the principal help to the right praising of him with our lips.'—For out of the heart's abundance the mouth will speak : and if the heart do not bear its part, no praise is melodious to God.

Direct. III. ' Read much those Scriptures which speak of the praises of God ; especially the Psalms : and furnish your memories with store of those holy expressions of the excellencies of God, which he himself hath taught you in his Word.'—None knoweth the things of God, but the Spirit of God ; who teacheth us in the Scripture to speak divinely of things divine. No other dialect so well becometh the work of praise. God, that best knoweth himself, doth best teach us how to know and praise him. Every Christian should have a treasury of these sacred materials in his memory, that he may be able, at all times, in conference and in worship, to speak of God in the words of God.

Direct. IV. ' Be much in singing psalms of praise, and that with the most heart-raising cheerfulness and melody : especially in the holy assemblies.'—The melody and the conjunction of many serious, holy souls, doth tend much to elevate the heart. And where it is done intelligibly, reverently, in conjunction with a rational, spiritual, serious worship, the use of musical instruments are not to be scrupled or refused ; any more than the tunes or melody of the voice.

Direct. v. ' Remember to allow the praises of God, their due proportion in all your prayers.'—Use not to shut it out, or forget it, or cut it short with two or three words in the conclusion. The Lord's prayer begins and ends with it : and the three first petitions are for the glorifying the name of God, and the coming of his kingdom, and the doing of his will, by which he is glorified : and all this before we ask any thing directly for ourselves. Use will much help you in the praise of God.

Direct. VI. ' Especially let the Lord's day be principally spent in praises and thanksgivings for the work of our redemption, and the benefits thereof.'—This day is separated by God himself to this holy work : and if you spend it (ordinarily) in other religious duties, that subserve not this, you spend it not as God requireth you. The thankful and praiseful commemoration of the work of man's redemption,

is the special work of the day : and the celebrating of the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, (which is therefore called the Eucharist) was part of these laudatory exercises, and used every Lord's day by the primitive church. It is not only a holy day, separated to God's worship in general, but to this eucharistical worship in special above the rest, as a day of praises and thanksgiving unto God : and thus all Christians (ordinarily) should use it.

Direct. vii. ' Let your holy conference with others be much about the glorious excellencies, works, and mercies of the Lord, in way of praise and admiration.'—This is indeed to speak to edification, and as the " oracles of God^d." " That God in all things may be glorified." " In his temple doth every one speak of his glory^e." " My tongue shall speak of thy righteousness, and of thy praises all the day long^f." " And men shall speak of the might of thy terrible acts.—They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power : to make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom.—My mouth shall speak of the praises of the Lord, and let all flesh bless his holy name for ever and ever^g." " Talk ye of all his wondrous works : glory ye in his holy name^h."

Direct. viii. ' Speak not of God in a light, irreverent, or common sort, as if you talked of common things : but with all possible seriousness, gravity, and reverence, as if you saw the majesty of the Lord.'—A common and a holy manner of speech are contrary. That only is holy, which is separated to God from common use. You speak profanely, (in the manner, how holy soever the matter be,) when you speak of God with that careless levity, as you use to speak of common things. Such speaking of God is dishonourable to him, and hurts the hearers more than silence, by breeding in them a contempt of God, and teaching them to imitate you, in slight conceits and speech of the Almighty : whereas, one that speaketh reverently of God, as in his presence, doth oftentimes more affect the hearers with a reverence of his majesty, with a few words, than irreverent preachers with the most accurate sermons, delivered in a common or affected strain. Whenever you speak of God, let the hear-

^d Eph. iv. 29.^e 1 Pet. iv. 11.

Psalm. xxix. 9.

^f Psalm. xxxv. 28.^g Psalm. cxlv. 6. 11. 21.^h Psalm. cx. 2, 3.

ers perceive that your hearts are possessed with his fear and love, and that you put more difference between God and man, than between a king and the smallest worm: so when you talk of death or judgment, of heaven or hell, of holiness or sin, or any thing that nearly relates to God, do it with that gravity and seriousness, as the matter doth require.

Direct. ix. ‘Speak not so unskilfully and foolishly of God, or holy things, as may tempt the hearers to turn it into a matter of scorn or laughter.’—Especially understand how your parts are suited to the company that you are in. Among those that are more ignorant, some weak discourses may be tolerable and profitable; for they are most affected with that which is delivered in their own dialect and mode: but among judicious or captious hearers, unskilful persons must be very sparing of their words, lest they do hurt, while they desire to do good, and make religion seem ridiculous. We may rejoice in the scorns which we undergo for Christ, and which are bent against his holy laws, or the substance of our duty: but if men are jeered for speaking ridiculously and foolishly of holy things, they have little reason to take comfort in any thing of that, but their honest meanings and intents: nay, they must be humbled for being a dishonour to the name of godliness. But the misery is, that few of the ignorant and weak have knowledge and humility enough to perceive their ignorance and weakness, but they think they speak as wisely as the best, and are offended if their words be not revered accordingly. As a minister should study and labour for a skill and ability to preach, because it is his work; so every Christian should study for skill to discourse with wisdom and meet expressions, about holy things, because this is his work. And, as unfit expressions and behaviour in a minister, do cause contempt instead of edifying; so do they in discourse.

Direct. x. ‘Whenever God’s holy name or word is blasphemed, or used in levity or jest, or a holy life is made a scorn, or God is notoriously abused or dishonoured, be ready to reprove it with gravity where you can; and where you cannot, at least let your detestation of it be conveniently manifested.’—Among those to whom you may freely speak, lay open the greatness of their sin. Or, if you are unable

for long or accurate discourse, at least tell them who hath said, “Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.” And where your speech is unmeet (as to some superiors), or is like to do more harm than good, let your departing the room, or your looks, or rather your tears shew your dislike.

Directions for the Glorifying God in our Lives.

Direct. 1. ‘Our lives then glorify God, when they are such as his excellencies most appear in: and that is, when they are most divine or holy; when they are so managed, that the world may see, that it is God that we have chiefly respect unto, and that HOLINESS TO THE LORD is written upon all our faculties and affairs.’—So much of GOD as appeareth in our lives, so much they are truly venerable, and advanced above the rank of fleshly, worldly livesⁱ. God only is the real glory of every person, and every thing, and every word or action of our lives. And the natural conscience of the world, which in despite of their atheism, is forced to confess and reverence a Deity, will be forced (even when they are hated and persecuted,) to reverence the appearance of God in his holy ones. Let it appear therefore, 1. That God’s authority commandeth you, above all the powers of the earth, and against all the power of fleshly lusts. 2. That it is the glory and interest of God that you live for, and look after principally in the world, and not your own carnal interest and glory: and that it is his work that you are doing, and not your own; and his cause, and not your own, that you are engaged in^k. 3. That it is his word and law that is your rule. 4. And the example of his Son that is your pattern. 5. And that your hearts and lives are moved and acted in the world, by motives fetched from the rewards which he hath promised, and the punishments which he hath threatened, in the world to come. 6. And that it is a supernatural, powerful principle, sent from God

ⁱ Turpissimum est philosopho secus docere quam vivere. Paul. Scaliger. p. 728.

^k Nam illa quæ de regno cælorum commemorantur à nobis, deque præsentium rerum contemptu, vel non capiunt, vel non facile sibi persuadent cum sermo factis evertitur. Acosta, lib. iv. c. 18. p. 418.

into your hearts, even the Holy Ghost, by which you are inclined and actuated in the tenor of your lives. 7. And that your daily converse is with God, and that men, and other creatures are comparatively nothing to you, but are made to stand by, while God is preferred, and honoured, and served by you: and that all your business is with him, or for him in the world.

Direct. II. ‘The more of heaven appeareth in your lives, the more your lives do glorify God.’—Worldly and carnal men are conscious, that their glory is a vanishing glory, and their pleasure but a transitory dream, and that all their honour and wealth will shortly leave them in the dust: and therefore, they are forced, in despite of their sensuality, to bear some reverence to the life to come. And though they have not hearts themselves, to deny the pleasures and profits of the world, and to spend their days in preparing for eternity, and in laying up a treasure in heaven; yet they are convinced, that those that do so, are the best and wisest men; and they could wish that they might die the death of the righteous, and that their last end might be like his. As heaven exceedeth earth, even in the reverent acknowledgment of the world, though not in their practical esteem and choice: so heavenly Christians have a reverent acknowledgment from them, (when malice doth not hide their heavenliness by slanders,) though they will not be such themselves. Let it appear in your lives, that really you seek a higher happiness than this world affordeth, and that you verily look to live with Christ, and that as honour, and wealth, and pleasure command the lives of the ungodly, so the hope of heaven commandeth yours. Let it appear that this is your design and business in the world, and that your hearts and conversation are above, and that whatever you do or suffer, is for this, and not for any lower end; and this is a life that God is glorified by.

Direct. III. ‘It glorifieth God, by shewing the excellency of faith, when we contemn the riches and honours of the world, and live above the worldling’s life; accounting that a despicable thing, which he accounts his happiness, and loseth his soul for.’—As men despise the toys of children, so a believer must take the transitory vanities of this world, for matters so inconsiderable, as not to be worthy of his re-

gard, save only as they are the matter of his duty to God, or as they relate to him, or the life to come. Saith Paul, "We look not at the things which are seen," (they are not worth our observing, or looking at) "but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal¹." The world is under a believer's feet, while his eye is fixed on the celestial world. He travelleth through it to his home, and he will be thankful if his way be fair, and if he have his daily bread: but it is not his home, nor doth he make any great matter, whether his usage in it be kind or unkind, or whether his inn be well adorned or not. He is almost indifferent, whether, for so short a time, he be rich or poor, in a high, or in a low condition, further than as it tendeth to his Master's service. Let men see that you have a higher birth than they, and higher hopes, and higher hearts, by setting light by that, which their hearts are set upon as their felicity. When seeming Christians are as worldly and ambitious as others, and make as great a matter of their gain, and wealth, and honour, it sheweth that they do but cover the base and sordid spirit of worldlings, with the visor of the Christian name, to deceive themselves, and bring the faith of Christians into scorn, and dishonour the holy name which they usurp.

Direct. iv. 'It much honoureth God, when his servants can quietly and fearlessly trust in him, in the face of all the dangers and threatenings which devils or men cast before them; and can joyfully suffer pain or death, in obedience to his commands, and in confidence on his promise of everlasting happiness.'—This sheweth that we believe indeed that "there is a God," and that "he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him^m;" and that he is true and just, and that his promises are to be trusted on; and that he is able to make them good, in despite of all the malice of his enemies; and that the threats or frowns of sinful worms are contemptible to him that feareth God. "So that men shall say, Verily there is a reward for the righteous: verily there is a God that judgeth in the earthⁿ;" and that at last will judge the world in righteousness. Paul gloried in the Thessalonians, "for their faith and patience, in all their per-

¹ 2 Cor. iv. 18.^m Heb. xi. 6.ⁿ Psal. lxxiii. 24.

secutions and tribulations which they endured; as a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that they might be accounted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which they suffered: seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble us, and rest with his saints to those that are troubled^o.” “If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory, and of God, resteth upon you; on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified^p.” “If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf^q.” When confidence in God, and assurance of the “great reward in heaven^r,” do cause a believer undauntedly to say, as the three witnesses, “We are not careful, O king, to answer thee in this matter: the God whom we serve is able to deliver us^s :” when by faith we can go through the trial of carnal mockings and scourgings, of bonds and imprisonment, to be destitute and afflicted, yea, and tortured, not accepting deliverance (upon sinful terms), thus God is glorified by believers. “Lift up your voices,” O ye afflicted saints, “and sing, for the majesty of the Lord.—Glorify ye the Lord in the fires, even the name of the Lord God of Israel in the isles of the sea^t.” Sing to his praise with Paul and Silas, though your feet be in the stocks. If God call for your lives, remember that “you are not your own: you are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your bodies and spirits which are his^u.” Rejoice in it, if you “bear in your bodies the marks of the Lord Jesus^v.” And if you “always bear about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be manifested in your bodies^w.” And “with all boldness,” see that “Christ be magnified in your bodies, whether it be by life or death^x.” He dishonoureth and reproacheth Christ and faith, that thinks he is not to be trusted even unto the death.

Direct. v. ‘It much honoureth God, when the hopes of everlasting joys, do cause believers to live much more joyfully than the most prosperous worldlings.’—Not with their

^o 2 Thess. i. 4—7.

^r Matt. v. 11, 12.

^u 1 Cor. vi. 20.

^x Phil. i. 20.

^p 1 Pet. iv. 14.

^s Dan. iii. 16, 17.

^v Gal. vi. 17.

^q Ver. 16.

^t Isa. xxiv. 14, 15.

^w 2 Cor. iv. 10.

kind of doting mirth, in vain sports and pleasures, and foolish talking, and uncomely jests ; but in that constant cheerfulness and gladness, which beseemeth the heirs of glory. Let it appear to the world, that indeed you hope to live with Christ, and to be equal with the angels. Do a dejected countenance, and a mournful, troubled, and complaining life, express such hopes ? or rather tell men that your hopes are small, and that God is a hard Master, and his service grievous ? Do not thus dishonour him by your inordinate dejectedness : do not affright and discourage sinners from the pleasant service of the Lord.

Direct. vi. ‘ When Christians live in a readiness to die, and can rejoice in the approach of death, and love and long for the day of judgment, when Christ shall justify them from the slanders of the world, and shall judge them to eternal joys : this is to the glory of God and our profession.’—When death, which is the king of fears to others, appeareth as disarmed and conquered to believers : when judgment, which is the terror of others, is their desire ; this sheweth a triumphant faith, and that godliness is not in vain. It must be something above nature that can make a man “ desire to depart and be with Christ, as best of all,” and “ to be absent from the body and present with the Lord,” and to “ comfort one another” with the mention of the glorious coming of their Lord, and the day when he shall judge the world in righteousness^a.

Direct. vii. ‘ The humility, and meekness, and patience of Christians, much honour God and their holy faith : as pride, and passion, and impatience dishonour him.’—Let men see that the Spirit of God doth cast down the devilish sin of pride, and maketh you like your Master, that humbled himself to assume our flesh, and to the “ death of the cross,” and to the contradiction and reproach of foolish sinners, and “ made himself of no reputation,” but “ endured the shame,” of being derided, spit upon, and crucified^b, and stooped to wash the feet of his disciples. It is not stoutness and lifting up the head, and standing upon your terms, and upon your honour in the world, that is the honouring of God. When you are as little children, and as nothing in

^a Phil. i. 21. 2 Cor. v. 8. 1 Thess. iv. 18. 2 Thess. 1. 10.

^b Phil. ii. 7—9. Heb. xii. 2.

your own eyes, and seek not the honour that is of men, but say, "Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to thy name be the glory^c;" and are content that your honour decrease and be trodden into the dirt, that his may increase, and his name be magnified; this is the glorifying of God. So when you shew the world, that you are above the impotent passions of men, not to be insensible, but to be "angry and sin not," and to "give place to wrath," and not to resist and "avenge yourselves^d:" and to be "meek and lowly in heart^e." It will appear that you have the wisdom which is "from above," if you be "first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and hypocrisy^f." "But if you have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth," as if this were the wisdom from above which glorifieth God: for this "wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, and devilish^g." "A meek and quiet spirit is of great price in the sight of God^h:" an ornament commended to women by the Scripture; which is amiable in the eyes of all.

Direct. VIII. 'It honoureth God and your profession, when you abound in love and in good works: loving the godly with a special love, but all men with so much love, as makes you earnestly desirous of their welfare, and to love your enemies, and put up wrongs, and to study to do good to all, and hurt to none.'—To be abundant in love, is to be like to God, who is Love itselfⁱ; and sheweth that God dwelleth in us^k. "All men may know that we are Christ's disciples, if we love one another^l." This is the "new" and the "great commandment; the fulfilling of the law^m." You will be known to be the "children of your heavenly Father, if you love your enemies, and bless them that curse you, and pray for them that hate and persecute you, and despitefully use youⁿ." Do all the good that possibly you can, if you would be like him that doth good to the evil, and whose mercies are over all his works. Shew the world that you "are his workmanship, created to good works in Christ

^c Psal. cxv. 1.^d Rom. xii. 19.^e Matt. xi. 29.^f James iii. 17.^g Ver. 14, 15.^h 1 Pet. iii. 4.ⁱ 1 John iv. 7, 11.^k Ver. 12.^l John xiii. 35.^m Rom. xiii. 10. John xv. 12, 17. xiii. 34.ⁿ Matt. v. 44.

Jesus, which he hath ordained for you to walk in^o.” “ Here-in is your Father glorified, that ye bring forth much fruit^p.” “ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven^q.” “ Honour God with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thy increase^r.” “ And those that honour him he will honour^s.” When barren, worldly hypocrites, that honour God only with their lips, and flattering words, shall be used as those that really dishonour him.

Direct. ix. ‘ The unity, concord, and peace of Christians, do glorify God and their profession : when their divisions, contentions, and malicious persecutions of one another, do heinously dishonour him.’—Men reverence that faith and practice which they see us unanimously accord in. And the same men will despise both it and us, when they see us together by the ears about it, and hear us in a Babel of confusion, one saying, ‘ This is the way,’ and another, ‘ That is it :’ one saying, ‘ Lo here is the true church and worship,’ and another saying, ‘ Lo it is there.’ Not that one man or a few must make a shoe meet for his own foot, and then say, ‘ All that will not dishonour God by discord, must wear this shoe : think as I think, and say as I say, or else you are schismatics.’ But we must all agree in believing^t and obeying God, and “ walking by the same rule so far as we have attained^u.” “ The strong must bear the infirmities of the weak, and not please themselves ; but every one of us please his neighbour for good to edification ; and be likeminded one towards another, according to Christ Jesus, that we may with one mind, and one mouth glorify God : receiving one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God^v.”

Direct. x. ‘ Justice commutative and distributive, private and public, in bargainings, and in government, and judgment, doth honour God and our profession in the eyes of all : when we do no wrong, but do to all men as we would they should do to us^x : that no man go beyond or defraud his brother in any matter : for the Lord is the avenger of all such^y.’—That a man’s word be his master, and that we lie not one to another, nor equivocate or deal subtilly and de-

^o Ephes. ii. 10.

^r Prov. iii. 9.

^u Rom. xv. 1, 2. 5—7.

^p John xv. 8.

^q 1 Sam. ii. 30.

^x Matt. vii. 12.

^q Matt. v. 16.

^t Phil. iii. 15, 16.

^v 1 Thess. iv. 6.

ceitfully, but in plainness and singleness of heart, and in simplicity and godly sincerity have our conversation in the world. Perjured persons and covenant-breakers, that dissolve the bonds of human society, and take the name of God in vain, shall find by his vengeance that he holdeth them not guiltless.

Direct. xi. 'It much glorifieth God to worship him rationally and purely, in spirit and in truth, according to the glory of his wisdom and goodness, and it dishonoureth him to be worshipped ignorantly and carnally, with spells and mimical, irrational actions, as if he were less wise than serious, grave, understanding men.'—The worshippers of God have great cause to take heed how they behave themselves: lest they meet with the reward of Nadab and Abihu, and God tell them by his judgments, "that he will be sanctified in all them that come nigh him, and before all the people he will be glorified²." The second commandment is enforced by the jealousy of God about his worship. Ignorant, rude, unseemly words, or unhandsome gestures, which tend to raise contempt in the auditors; or levity of speech, which makes men laugh, is abominable in a preacher of the Gospel. And so is it to pray irrationally, incoherently, confusedly, with vain repetitions and tautologies, as if men thought to be heard for their babbling over so many words, while there is not so much as an appearance of a well composed, serious, rational, and reverent address of a fervent soul to God. To worship God as the Papists do, with images, Agnus Dei's, crucifixes, crossings, spittle, oil, candles, holy water, kissing the pax, dropping beads, praying to the Virgin Mary, and to other saints, repeating over the name of Jesus nine times in a breath, and saying such and such sentences so oft, praying to God in an unknown tongue, and saying to him they know not what, adoring the consecrated bread as no bread, but the very flesh of Christ himself, choosing the titular saint whose name they will invoke, fasting by feasting upon fish instead of flesh, saying so many masses a day, and offering sacrifice for the quick and the dead, praying for souls in purgatory, purchasing indulgences for their deliverance out of purgatory from the pope, carrying the pretended bones or other relics of their saints,

² Lev. x. 1—3.

the pope's canonizing now and then one for a saint, pretending miracles to delude the people, going on pilgrimages to images, shrines, or relics, offering before the images, with a multitude more of such parcels of devotion, do most heinously dishonour God, and, as the apostle truly saith, do make unbelievers say, "They are mad^a;" and that they are "children in understanding," and not "men^b." Insomuch as it seemeth one of the greatest impediments to the conversion of the heathen and Mahometan world, and the chiefest means of confirming them in their infidelity, and making them hate and scorn Christianity, that the Romish, and the Eastern, and Southern churches, within their view, do worship God so dishonourably as they do: as if God were like a little child that must have pretty toys bought him in the fair, and brought home to please him. Whereas, if the unreformed churches in the East, West, and South were reformed, and had a learned, pious, able ministry, that clearly preached and seriously applied the word of God, and worshipped God with understanding, gravity, reverence, and serious spirituality, and lived a holy, heavenly, mortified, self-denying conversation, this would be the way to propagate Christianity, and win the infidel world to Christ.

Direct. xii. 'If you will glorify God in your lives, you must be above a selfish, private, narrow mind, and must be chiefly intent upon the public good, and the spreading of the Gospel through the world.'—A selfish, private, narrow soul brings little honour to the cause of God: it is always taken up about itself, or imprisoned in a corner, in the dark, to the interest of some sect or party, and seeth not how things go in the world: its desires and prayers, and endeavours go no further than they can see or travel. But a larger soul beholdeth all the earth, and is desirous to know how it goeth with the cause and servants of the Lord, and how the Gospel gets ground upon the unbelieving nations; and such are affected with the state of the church a thousand miles off, almost as if it were at hand, as being members of the whole body of Christ, and not only of a sect. They pray for the "hallowing of God's name," and the "coming of his kingdom," and the "doing of his will throughout the earth, as it is in heaven," before they come to their own necessities,

^a 1 Cor. xiv. 23.

^b Verse 20.

at least in order of esteem and desire. The prosperity of themselves, or their party or country satisfieth them not, while the church abroad is in distress. They live as those that know the honour of God is more concerned in the welfare of the whole, than in the success of any party against the rest. They pray that the Gospel may have free course and be glorified abroad, as it is with them, and the preachers of it be “delivered from unreasonable and wicked men^c.” The silencing the ministers, and suppressing the interest of Christ and souls, are the most grievous tidings to them: therefore they “pray for kings, and all in authority,” not for any carnal ends, but that “we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty^d.” Thus God must be glorified by our lives.

Grand Direct. xvi. ‘Let your life on earth be a conversation in heaven, by the constant work of faith and love: even such a faith as maketh things future as now present, and the unseen world as if it were continually open to your sight: and such a love as makes you long to see the glorious face of God, and the glory of your dear Redeemer, and to be taken up with blessed spirits in his perfect, endless love and praise.’

My Treatise of “The Life of Faith,” and the fourth part of “The Saints’ Rest,” being written wholly or mostly to this use, I must refer the reader to them, and say no more of it in this Direction.

Grand Direct. xvii. ‘As the soul must be carried up to God, and devoted to him, according to all the foregoing Directions, so must it be delivered from carnal selfishness, or flesh-pleasing, which is the grand enemy to God and godliness in the world: and from the three great branches of this idolatry, viz. the love of sensual pleasures, the love of worldly wealth, and the proud desire and love of worldly honour and esteem: and the mortifying of these must be much of the labour of your lives.’

Of this also I have written so much in a “Treatise of Self-denial,” and in another called “The Crucifying of the World by the Cross of Christ,” that I shall now pass by all,

^c 2 Thess. iii. 1, 2.

^d 1 Tim. ii. 1—3.

save what will be more seasonable anon under the more particular Directions, in the Fourth Part, when I come to speak of Selfishness, as opposed to the love of others^e.

I have now given you the General Grand Directions, containing the very Being and Life of Godliness and Christianity, with those Particular Sub-directions which are needful to the performance of them. And I must tell you, that as your life, and strength, and comfort principally depend on these, so doth your success in resisting all your particular sins : and therefore if you first obey not these General Directions, the more particular ones that follow, will be almost useless to you, even as branches cut off from the stock of the tree, which are deprived thereby of their support and life. But upon supposition that first you will maintain these vital parts of your religion, I shall proceed to direct you, first in some particulars most nearly subordinate to the forementioned Duties, and then to the remoter branches.

APPENDIX.

The true Doctrine of Love to God, to Holiness, to Ourselves, and to Others, opened in certain Propositions ; especially for resolving the Questions, What self-love is lawful?—what sinful?—Whether God must be loved above our own felicity, and how?—Whether to love our felicity more than God may stand with a state of saving grace?—Whether it be a middle state between sensuality and the Divine nature to love God more for ourselves than for himself?—Whether to love God for ourselves be the state of a believer as he is under the promise of the New Covenant?—And whether the spirit and sanctification promised to believers, be the love of God for himself and so the Divine nature promised to him that chooseth Christ and God by him out of self-love for his own felicity?—How God supposeth and

^e I pass not this by as a small matter, to be passed by also by the reader. For I take the Love of God, kindled by faith in Christ, with the full denial of our carnal selves, to be the sum of all religion. But because I would not injure so great a duty by saying but a little of it ; and therefore desire the reader who studieth for practice, and needeth such helps, to peruse the mentioned books of “ Self-denial,” and “ Crucifying the World.”

worketh on the principle of self-love in man's conversion?—with many such like. To avoid the tediousness of a distinct debating each question.

THOUGH these things principally belong to the theory, and so to another treatise in hand, called “*Methodus Theologiæ* ;” yet because they are also practical, and have a great influence upon the more Practical Directions, and the right understanding of them may help the reader himself, to determine a multitude of Cases of Conscience, the particular discussion and decision of which would too much increase this volume, which is so big already, I shall here explain them in such brief Propositions as yet shall give light to one another, and I hope contain much of the true nature of Love, which is the mystery of the Christian religion.

Prop. 1. The formal act of Love is Complacency, expressed by a ‘*placet* ;’ which Augustine so oft calleth *Delectation*.

2. Benevolence, or desiring the good of those we love, is but a secondary act of love, or an effect of the prime, formal act. For to wish one well is not to love him formally ; but we wish him well because we love him, and therefore first in order love him.

3. Their definition of love is therefore inept, and but from an effect, who say it is, ‘*Alicui bene velle, ut ipsi bene sit.*’

4. Love is either merely sensitive and passionate, which is the sensible act and passion of the sensitive and fantastical appetite ; or it is rational, which is the act of the rational appetite or will. The first is called sensitive in a double respect, 1. because it followeth the apprehension of the senses, or fantasy, loving that which they apprehend as good ; 2. and because it is exercised passionately and feelingly by the sensitive appetite. And the other is called rational, 1. because it is the love of that which reason apprehendeth as good ; and 2. because it is the complacency of that will which is a higher faculty than the sensitive appetite.

5. Sensitive love is oft without rational (always in brutes), but rational love is never totally without sensitive, at least in this life ; whether it be because that the sensitive and rational are faculties of the same soul, or because they are so nearly connexed as that one cannot move or act without the other ?

6. But yet one is predominant in some persons, and the other in others.

7. Love is the complacency of the appetite in apprehended good. Good is the formal object of love. Sensitive love is the complacency of the sensitive appetite in sensible good, (or in that which the sense and imagination apprehend as good). Rational love is the complacency of the rational appetite in that which reason apprehendeth good: the same thing with primary volition.

8. Good is not only a man's own felicity and the means thereto, called 'mihi bonum,' good to me; either as profitable, pleasant, or honourable (as some think that have unmanned themselves): but there is extrinsic good, which is such in itself, in others, or for others, which yet is the natural object of man's love, (so far as nature is sound.) As the learning, and wisdom, and justice, and charity, and all other perfections of a man at the antipodes, whom I never saw nor hope to see, or to receive any benefit by, is yet amiable to every man that hath not unmanned himself. So also is the good of posterity, of countries, of kingdoms, of the church, of the world, apprehended as future when we are dead and gone; yea, if we should be annihilated, desirable, and therefore amiable to us; when yet it could be no benefit to us.

9. Self-love is sensitive or rational: sensitive as such is necessary and not free; and it is purposely by the most wise and blessed Creator planted in man and brutes, as a principle useful to preserve the world, and to engage the creature in the use of the means of its own preservation, and so to bring it to perfection, and to endue it with those fears and hopes which make us subjects capable of moral government:

10. The rational or higher appetite also hath a natural inclination to self-preservation, perfection and felicity; but as ordainable and ordinate to higher ends.

11. The rational powers cannot nullify the sensitive, nor directly or totally hinder the action of them; but they may and must indirectly hinder the act, by avoiding the objects and temptations, by diverting the thoughts to higher things, &c.; and may hinder the effects by governing the locomotive power.

12. Sensitive self-love containeth in it, 1. A love of life, and, that is, of individual self-existence; 2. And a love of all sensitive pleasures of life; and, 3. Consequently, a love of the means of life and pleasure.

13. In sensitive self-love, therefore, self, that is, life, is both the material and formal object: we love ourselves even because we are ourselves; we love this individual person, and loathe annihilation or dissolution.

14. Though the will (or higher faculties) are naturally inclined also to love ourselves, and our own felicity, yet they exercise this inclination with a certain liberty; and though the act of simple complacency or volition towards our own being and felicity be so free as yet to be necessary, yet the comparative act (by which comparing several goods, we choose one and refuse another) may be so free as not to be necessary; that is, a man may will his own annihilation rather than some greater evil (of which anon), not as good in itself, and therefore not willed for itself, but as a means to a greater good; and so he may less nill it than a greater evil.

15. Also a tolerable pain may on the same account be willed, or less nilled, and so consented to for the avoiding of a greater evil; but intolerable pain cannot possibly be willed, or consented to, or not nilled, because it taketh away the exercise of reason and free-will; but what is to be called intolerable I determine not, it being variously measurable according to the patient's strength.

16. The soul as intellectual, by its rational appetite, hath also a natural inclination to intellectual operations (to know and love) and to intellectual objects as such, and to intellectual perfections in itself. Yet so that, though it necessarily (though freely) loveth the said acts and perfections while it hath a being; yet doth it not necessarily love all the said objects, nor necessarily choose the continuance of its own being, but in some cases, as aforesaid, can yield or consent to an annihilation as a lesser evil.

17. The rational soul being not of itself, nor for itself alone, or chiefly, is naturally inclined not only to love to itself, and that which is for itself, but also to love extrinsic good, as was aforesaid; and accordingly it should love that *best which is best*: for 'a quatenus et ad omne et ad gra-

dum, valet argumentum.' If we must love any thing or person because it is good (as the formal reason) then we should love all that is good, and love that best which is best, if so discerned.

18. Though I must love greater, simple, extrinsic good above myself, with that love which is purely rational, yet it cannot ordinarily be done with a more sensitive and passionate love.

19. I am not always bound to do most good to him that I love better than others, and ought so to love, nor to him that I must wish most good to. Because there are other particular laws to regulate my actions, divers from that which commandeth my affections: as those that put children, relations, families, neighbours, under our especial charge and care; though often others must be more loved.

20. That good which is the object of love is not a mere universal or general notion, but is always some particular or singular being '*in esse reali, vel in esse cognito.*' As there is no such thing in '*rerum natura,*' as good in a mere general, which is neither the good of natural existence, or of moral perfection, or of pleasure, profit, honour, &c. Yea, which is not in this or in that singular subject, or so conceived; so there is no such thing as love, which hath not some such singular object. (As Rada and other Scotists have made plain.)

21. All good is either God or a creature, or a creature's act or work.

22. God is Good infinitely, eternally, primitively, independently, immutably, communicatively, of whom, and by whom, and to whom are all things: the Beginning or first efficient, the Dirigent and ultimately ultimate cause of all created good; as making and directing all things for himself.

23. Therefore it is the duty of the intellectual creature to love God totally, without any exceptions or restrictions, with all the power, mind, and will, not only in degree above ourselves and all the world; but also as God, with a love in kind transcending the love of every creature.

24. All the goodness of the creature doth formally consist in its threefold relation to God, viz. 1. In the impresses of God as its first efficient or creator; as it is his image or

the effect and demonstration of his perfections, viz. his infinite power, wisdom, and goodness. 2. In its conformity to his directions, or governing laws, and so in its order and obedience. 3. And in its aptitude and tendency to God as its final cause, even to the demonstration of his glory and the complacency of his will.

25. All created good is therefore derivative, dependent, contingent, finite, secondary, from God, by God, and to God, receiving its form and measure from its respect to him.

26. Yet as it may be subordinately from man, as the principle of his own actions, and by man as a subordinate ruler of himself or others, and to man as a subordinate end; so there is accordingly a subordinate sort of goodness, which is so denominated from these respects unto the creature, that is himself good, subordinately.

27. But all this subordinate goodness ('bonum a nobis, bonum per nos, bonum nobis') is but analogically so; and dependently on the former sort of goodness, and is something in due subordination to it, and against it, nothing, that is, not properly good.

28. The best and most excellent creatures, in the aforesaid goodness related to God are most to be loved; and all according to the degree of their goodness, more than as good in relation to ourselves.

29. But seeing their goodness is formally their relation unto God, it followeth that they are loved primarily only for his sake, and consequently God's image or glory in them is first loved; and so the true love of any creature is but a secondary sort of the love of God.

30. The best being next to God is the universe or whole creation, and therefore next him most to be loved by us.

31. The next in amiableness is the whole celestial society, Christ, angels, and saints.

32. The next, when we come to distinguish them, is Christ's own created, glorified nature in the person of the Mediator, because God's glory or image is most upon him.

33. The next in amiableness is the whole angelical society, or the orders of intellectual spirits above man.

34. The next is the spirits of the just made perfect, or the triumphant church of saints in heaven.

35. The next is all this lower world.

36. The next is the church in the world, or militant on earth.

37. The next are the particular kingdoms and societies of the world, (and so the churches,) according to their various degrees.

38. The next under societies and multitudes are those individual persons who are best in the three aforementioned respects, whether ourselves or others. And thus, by the objects, should our love that is rational be diversified in degree, and that be loved best that is best.

39. The amiable image of God in man is (as hath oft been said): 1. Our natural image of God, or the image of his three essential properties as such, that is, our vital, active power, our intellect, and our will. 2. Our moral image, or the image of his said properties in their perfections, viz. Our holiness, that is, our holy life or spiritual vivacity and active power, our holy light or wisdom, our holy wills or love. 3. Our relative image of God, or the image of his supereminency, dominion, or majesty; which is, 1. common to man, in respect to the inferior creatures, that we are their owners, governors, and end (and benefactors); 2. eminently in rulers of men, parents, and princes, who are analogically sub-owners, sub-rulers, and sub-benefactors to their inferiors, in various degrees. By which it is discernible what it is that we are to love in man, and with what variety of kinds and degrees of love, as the kinds and degrees of amiableness in the objects differ.

40. Even the sun, and moon, and frame of nature, the inanimates and brutes, must be loved in that degree compared to man and to one another, as their goodness before described, that is, the impressions of the Divine perfections do more or less gloriously appear in them, and as they are adapted to him the ultimate end.

41. As God is in this life seen but darkly and as in a glass, so also proportionably to be loved: for our love cannot exceed our knowledge.

42. Yet it followeth not that we must love him only as he appeareth in his works, which demonstrate him as effects do their cause; for both by the said works improved by reason, and by his Word, we know that he is before his works and above them, and so distinct from them as to

transcend, and comprehend, and cause them all, by a continual causality; and therefore he must accordingly be loved.

43. It greatly hindereth our love to God, when we overlook all the intermediate excellencies between him and us, which are much better, and therefore more amiable than ourselves; such as are before recited.

44. The love of the universe, as bearing the liveliest image or impress of its cause, is an eminent secondary love of God, and a great help to our primary or immediate love of him. Could we comprehend the glorious excellency of the universal creation, in its matter, form, parts, order, and uses, we should see so glorious an image of God as would unspeakably promote the work of love.

45. Whether the Glory of God in Heaven, which will for ever beatify the beholders and possessors, be the Divine Essence (which is every where), or a created glory purposely there placed for the felicity of holy spirits, and what that glory is, are questions fittest for the beholders and possessors to resolve.

46. But if it be no more than the universal, existent frame of nature, containing all the creatures of God, beheld 'uno intuitu' in the nature, order, and use of all the parts, it would be an inconceivable felicity to the beholders, as being an inconceivable glorious demonstration of the Deity.

47. It is lawful and a needful duty to labour by the means of such excellencies as we now know, which heaven is resembled to in Scripture, to imprint upon our imaginations themselves, such an image of the glory of the heavenly society, Christ, angels, saints, and the heavenly place and state, as shall help our intellectual apprehensions of the spiritual excellencies which transcend imagination. And the neglect of loving God as foreseen in the demonstration of the heavenly glory, doth greatly hinder our love to him immediately as in himself considered.

48. The Lord Jesus Christ, in his glorified, created nature, is crowned with the highest excellency of any particular creature, that he might be the Mediator of our love to God; and in him (seen by faith) we might see the glory of the Deity. And as in heaven we shall have (spiritual, glorified) bodies as well as souls, so the glorified, created

nature of Christ will be an objective glory, fit for our bodies (at least) to behold in order to their glory, as the Divine nature (as it pleaseth God in glory) revealed, will be to the soul.

49. The exercise of our love upon God as now appearing to the glorified, in the glorious, created nature of Christ, (beheld by us by faith) is a great part of our present exercise of divine love : and we extinguish our love to God, by beholding so little by faith our glorified Mediator.

50. We owe greater love to angels than to men, because they are better, nearer God, and liker to him, and more demonstrate his glory ; and indeed also love us better, and do more for us than we can do for one another. And the neglect of our due love and gratitude to angels, and forgetting our relation to them, and receivings by them, and communion with them, and living as if we had little to do with them, is a culpable overlooking God, as he appeareth in his most noble creatures, and is a neglect of our love to God in them, and a great hindrance to our higher more immediate love. Therefore by faith and love we should exercise a daily converse with angels, as part of our heavenly conversation^a, and use ourselves to love God in them : though not to pray to them, or give them Divine worship.

51. We must love the glorified saints more than the inhabitants of this lower world, because they are far better, and liker to God, and nearer to him, and more demonstrate his holiness and glory. And our neglect of conversing with them by faith, and of loving them above ourselves and things on earth, is a neglect of our love to God in them, and a hindrance of our immediate love. And a loving conversation with them by faith would greatly help our higher love to God.

52. Our neglect of love to the church on earth, and to the kingdoms and public societies of mankind, is a sinful neglect of our love to God in them, and a hindrance of our higher love to him ; and the true use of such a public love would greatly further our higher love.

53. If those heathens who laid down their lives for their countries had neither done this for fame, nor merely as esteeming the temporal good of their country, above their

^a Phil. iii. 20, 21. Heb. xii. 22.

own temporal good and lives, but for the true excellency of many above one, and for God's greater interest in them, they had done a most noble, holy work.

54. Our adherence to our carnal selves first, and then to our carnal interests, and friends, and neglecting the love of the highest excellencies in the servants of God, and not loving men according to the measure of the image of God on them, and their relation to him, is a great neglect of our love of God in them, and a hindrance of our higher immediate love. And to use ourselves to love men as God appeareth in them, would much promote our higher love. And so we should love the best of men above ourselves.

55. The loving of ourselves sensually, preferring our present life and earthly pleasure before our higher spiritual felicity in heaven, and our neglecting to love holiness, and seek it for ourselves, and then to love God in ourselves, is a neglect and hindrance of the love of God.

56. Man hath not lost so much of the knowledge and love of God, as appearing in his greatness, and wisdom, and natural goodness in the frame of nature, as he is the Author of the creatures' natural goodness, as he hath of the knowledge and love of his holiness, as he is the Holy Ruler, Sanctifier, and End of souls.

57. The sensitive faculty and sensitive interest are still predominant in a carnal or sensual man; and his reason is voluntarily enslaved to his sense: so that even the intellectual appetite, contrary to its primitive and sound nature, loveth chiefly the sensitive life and pleasure.

58. It is therefore exceeding hard in this depraved state of nature, to love God or any thing better than ourselves; because we love more by sense than by reason, and reason is weak and serveth the interest of sense.

59. Yet the same man who is prevalently sensual, may know that he hath a rational, immortal soul, and that knowledge and rectitude are the felicity of his soul; and that it is the knowledge and love of, and delight in God, the highest good, that can make him perpetually happy: and therefore as these are apprehended as a means of his own felicity, he may have some kind of love or will unto them all.

60. The thing therefore that every carnal man would have, is an everlasting, perfect, sensual pleasure; and he ap-

prehendeth the state of his soul's perfection mostly as consisting in this kind of felicity : and even the knowledge and love of God, which he taketh for part of his felicity, is principally apprehended but as a speculative gratifying of the imagination, as carnal men now desire knowledge. Or if there be a righter notion of God and holiness to be loved for themselves, even ultimately above our sensual pleasure and ourselves ; yet this is but an ineffectual, dreaming knowledge, producing but an answerable lazy wish : and it will not here prevail against the stronger love of sensuality and fantastical pleasure, nor against inordinate self-love. And it is a sensual heaven, under a spiritual name, which the carnal hope for.

61. This carnal man may love God as a means to this felicity so dreamed of ; as knowing that without him it cannot be had, and tasting corporal comforts from him here : and he may love holiness as it removeth his contrary calamities, and as he thinks it is crowned with such a reward. But he had rather have that reward of itself without holiness.

62. He may also love and desire Christ, as a means (conceived) to such an end ; and he may use much religious duty to that end ; and he may forbear such sins as that end can spare, lest they deprive him of his hoped-for felicity. Yea, he may suffer much to prevent an endless suffering.

63. As nature necessarily loveth self and self-felicity, God and the devil do both make great use of this natural 'pondus,' or necessitating principle, for their several ends. The devil saith, thou lovest pleasure, therefore take it and make provision for it. God saith, thou lovest felicity, and fearest misery : I and my love are the true felicity ; and adhering to sensual pleasure depriveth thee of better, and is the beginning of thy misery, and will bring thee unto worse.

64. God commandeth man nothing that is not for his own good, and forbiddeth him nothing which is not (directly or indirectly) to his hurt ; and therefore engageth self-love on his side, for every act of our obedience.

65. Yet this good of our own is not the highest, nor all the good which God intendeth, and we must intend ; but it is subordinate unto the greater good aforementioned.

66. As a carnal man may have opinionative, ineffectual

goodness and glorious revelation extend through, and by all inferior mediums, to our understandings, and our wills: and our knowledge and love ascend and extend through all, and by all again to God. And as it were unnatural for the eye, illuminated by the sun, to see itself only, or to see the mediate creatures, and not to see the light and sun by which it seeth (nay, it doth least see itself); so it is unnatural for the soul to understand and love itself alone (which it little understandeth, and should love with self-denial), and the creatures only, and not to love God, by whom we know and love the creature.

72. It is possible to love God, and holiness, and heaven, as a conceited state and means of our sensual felicity, and escape of pain and misery; but to love God as the true felicity of the intellectual nature, and as our spiritual rest, and yet to love him only or chiefly for ourselves, and not rather for himself as our highest end, implieth a contradiction. The same I say of holiness, as loved only for ourselves. The evidence whereof is plain, in that it is essential to God to be not only better than ourselves and every creature, but also to be the ultimate end of all things, to which they should tend in all their perfections. And it is essential to holiness to be the soul's devotion of itself to God as God, and not only to God as our felicity: therefore to love God only or chiefly for ourselves, is to make him only a means to our felicity, and not our chief end; and it is to make ourselves better, and so more amiable than God, that is, to be gods ourselves.

73. This is much of the sense of the controversy between the Epicureans and the sober philosophers, as is to be seen in Cicero, &c. The sober philosophers said, that virtue was to be loved for itself more than for pleasure; because if pleasure as such be better than virtue as such, then all sensual pleasure would be better than virtue as such. The Epicureans said, that not all pleasure but the pleasure of virtue was the chief good, (as Torquatus's words in Cicero shew.) And if it had been first proved, that a man's self is his just, ultimate end, as the 'finis cui' or the personal end, then it would be a hard question, whether the Epicureans were not in the right as to the 'finis cujus' or the real end, (which indeed is but a medium to the personal,

'cui.') But when it is most certain, that no man's person is to be his own personal end as 'cui,' but God, and then the universe, and societies of the world as beforesaid, it is then easy to prove that the sober philosophers were in the right, and that no man's pleasure is his ultimate end, 'finis cujus : ' because no man's pleasure is either such a demonstration of the Divine perfection as virtue is, as such ; nor yet doth it so much conduce to the common good of societies or mankind, and so to the pleasing and glorifying of God. And this way Cicero might easily have made good his cause against the Epicureans.

74. Though no man indeed love God as God, who loveth him not as better than himself, and therefore loveth him not better, and as his absolutely ultimate end, and though no man desire holiness indeed, who desireth not to be devoted absolutely to God before and above himself ; yet is it very common to have a false, imperfect notion of God and holiness, as being the felicity of man, and though not to deny, yet to leave out the essential superlative notion of the Deity ; and it is more common to confess all this of God and holiness notionally, as was aforesaid, and practically to take in no more of God and holiness, but that they are better for us than temporary pleasures. And some go further, and take them as better for them, than any (though perpetual) mere sensual delights ; and so make the perfection of man's highest faculties (practically) to be their ultimate end ; and desire or love God and holiness (defectively and falsely apprehended) for themselves, or their own felicity, and not themselves, and their felicity and holiness, ultimately for God. Which sheweth that though these men have somewhat overcome the sensual concupiscence or flesh, yet have they not sufficiently overcome the Selfish disposition, nor yet known and loved God as God, nor good as good.

75. Yet it is not a sin to love God for ourselves, and our own felicity, so be it we make him not a mere means to that felicity, as our absolutely ultimate end. For as God indeed is, 1. The Efficient of all our good. 2. The Dirigent Cause, that leadeth us to it. 3. The End in which our felicity truly consisteth ; so he is to be loved on all these accounts.

76. If God were not thus to be loved for ourselves, (subordinated to him,) thankfulness would not be a Christian duty.

77. Our love to God is a love of friendship, and a desire of a kind of union, communion, or adherence. But not such as is between creatures where there is some sort of equality: but as between them that are totally unequal; the one infinitely below the other, and absolutely subject and subordinate to him.

78. Therefore, though in love of friendship, a union of both parties, and consequently a conjunct interest of both, and not one alone, do make up the ultimate end of both; yet here it should be with an utter disproportion, we being obliged to know God as infinitely better than ourselves, and therefore to love him incomparably more, though yet it will be but according to the proportion of the faculties of the lover.

79. The purest process of love, therefore, is, first thankfully to receive the divine efficiencies, and to love God as communicative of what we and all things are, and have, and shall receive, and therein to see his perfect goodness in himself, and to love him as God for that goodness; wherein is nothing but the final act, which is our love, and the final object, which is the infinite good. So that the act is man's (from God) but nothing is to be joined with God as the absolutely final object; for that were to join somewhat with God as God.

80. And though it be most true, that this act may be made the object of another act, and, as Amesius saith, '*Omnium gentium consensu dicimus Volo velle,*' so we may and must say, '*Amo amare,*' I love to love God, and the very exercise of my own love is my delight, and so is my felicity in the very essential nature of it, being a complacency, and being on the highest objective good. And also this same love is my holiness, and so it and I are pleasing unto God; yet these are all consequential to the true notion of the final act, and circularly lead to the same again. We must love our felicity and holiness, which consist in our love to God, but as that which subordinately relateth to God, in which he is first glorified, and then finally pleased; and so from his Will which we delight to please, we ascend to his

total, perfect Being, to which we adhere by perfect love. In a word, our ultimate end of acquisition (and God's own, so far as he may be said to have an end) is the pleasing of the Divine will, in his glorification : and our ultimate end of complacency, objectively, is the infinite goodness of the Divine will and nature.

81. There is, therefore, place for the question, ' Whether I must love God, or myself, more or better ?' (as it is resolved.) But there is no place for the question, ' Whether I must love God or myself ?' Because God alloweth me not ever to separate them : (though there is a degree of just self-loathing or self-hatred, in deep repentance.) Nor yet for the question, ' Whether I must seek God's glory and pleasure, or my own felicity ?' for I must ever seek them both, though not with the same esteem. Yea, I may be said to seek them both with the same diligence ; because by the same endeavour and act that I seek one, I seek the other : and I cannot possibly do any thing for one, that doth not equally promote the other, if I do them rightly, preferring God before myself, in my inward estimation, love, and intention.

82. Though it be essential to Divine love, and consequently to true holiness, to love God for himself, and as better than ourselves, (or else we love him not as God, as is before said) yet this is hardly and seldom perceived in the beginning, in him that hath it : because the love of ourself is more passionate, and raiseth in us more subordinate passions, of fear of punishment, and desires of felicity, and sorrow for hurt and misery, &c. Whereas, God being immaterial and invisible, is not at all an object of our sense, but only of our reason and our wills ; and therefore not directly of sensitive, passionate love : though consequently while the soul is united to the body, its acting, even on immaterial objects, moveth the lower, sensitive faculties, and the corporeal spirits. Also, God needeth nothing for us to desire for him, nor suffereth any thing for us to grieve for, though we must grieve for injuring him, and being displeasing to his will.

83. I cannot say, nor believe (though, till it be searched, the opinion hath an enticing aspect) that the Gospel faith, which hath the promise of justification and of the Spirit, is

only a believing in Christ, as the means of our felicity, by redemption and salvation, out of the principle of self-love alone, and for no higher end than our said felicity: because he is not believed in as Christ, if he be not taken as a reconciler, to bring us home to God. And we take him not to bring us to God as God, if it be not to bring us to God as the beginning and end of all things, and as infinitely more lovely than ourselves. And our repentance for not loving God accordingly, above ourselves, must go along with our first justifying faith. Therefore, though we are learners before we are lovers, and our assent goeth before the will's consent, yet our assent that God is God, and better than ourselves, must go together with our assent that Christ is the Mediator to save us, by bringing us to him: and so must our assent that this is salvation, even to love God above ourselves, and as better than ourselves: and accordingly our consent to these particulars must concur in saving faith.

84. He, therefore, that out of self-love, accepteth Christ as the means of his own felicity, doth, if he know practically what felicity is, accept him as a means to bring him to love God perfectly, as God above himself, and to be perfectly pleasing to his will.

85. Yet it is apparent that almost all God's preparing grace consisteth in exciting and improving the natural principle of self-love in man; and manifesting to him, that if he will do as one that loveth himself, he must be a Christian, and must forsake sin, and the inordinate love of his sensuality, and must be holy, and love God for his own essential, as well as communicated goodness. And if he do otherwise, he will do as one that hateth himself, and seeketh in the event his own damnation. And could we but get men rationally to improve true self-love, they would be Christians, and so be holy.

86. But because this is a great, though tender point, and it that I have more generally touched in the case, 'Whether Faith in Christ, or Love to God, as our end, go first;' and because, indeed it is it for which I principally premise the rest of these Propositions, I shall presume to venture a little further, and more distinctly to tell you, how much of love to God is in our first justifying faith, and how much not:

and how far the state of such a believer is a middle state between mere preparation, or common grace, and proper sanctification, or possession of the Holy Ghost. And so, how far vocation giving us the first faith, and repentance, differeth from sanctification. And the rather, because my unriper thoughts and writings defended Mr. Pemble, who made them one, in opposition to the stream of our divines. And I conceive that all these following acts about the point in question, are found in every true believer, at his first faith, though not distinctly noted by himself.

(1.) The sinner hath an intellectual notice, that there is a God (for an atheist is not a believer), and so that this God is the first and last, the best of Beings; the Maker, Owner, Ruler and Benefactor of the world, the just end of all created actions, and to be loved and pleased above ourselves: for all this is but to believe that there is a God.

(2.) He is convinced that his own chief felicity lieth, not in temporary or carnal pleasure, but in the perfect knowing, loving, and pleasing this God above himself: for if he know not what true salvation and felicity are, he cannot desire or accept them.

(3.) He knoweth that hitherto he hath been without this love, and this felicity.

(4.) He desireth to be happy, and to escape everlasting misery.

(5.) He repenteth, that is, is sorry that he hath not all this while loved God as God, and sought felicity therein.

(6.) He is willing and desirous, for the time to come, to love God as God, above himself, and to please him before himself: that is, to have a heart disposed to do it.

(7.) He findeth that he cannot do it of himself, nor with his old, carnal, indisposed heart.

(8.) He believeth that Christ, by his doctrine and Spirit, is the appointed Saviour to bring him to it.

(9.) He gladly consenteth that Christ shall be such a Saviour to him, and shall not only justify him from guilt, and save him from sensible punishment, but also thus bring him to the perfect love of God.

(10.) He had rather Christ would bring him to this by sanctification, than to enjoy all the pleasures of sin for a

season; yea, or to have a perpetual sensitive felicity, without this perfect love to God, and pleasing of him.

(11.) God being declared to him in Jesus Christ, a God of love, forgiving sin, and conditionally giving pardon and life to his very enemies, as he is hence the more easily loved with thankfulness for ourselves; so the goodness of his nature in himself, is hereby insinuated and notified, with some secret complacency to the soul. He is, sure, good, that is so merciful and ready to do good, and that so wonderfully as in Christ is manifested.

(12.) So that as baptism (which is but explicit, justifying faith, or the expression of it in covenanting with God) is our dedication by vow to all the Three Persons: to God the Father, as well as to the Son and Holy Ghost; so faith itself is such a heart-dedication.

(13.) Herein I dedicate myself to God as God, to be glorified and pleased in my justification, sanctification, and glorification; that is, in my reception of the fruits of his love, and in my loving him above all, as God: or to be pleased in me, and I in him for ever.

(14.) In all this, the understanding acknowledgeth God to be God, (by assent) and to be loved above myself, and the will desireth so to love him: but the object of the will here directly, is its own future disposition and act. It doth not say, 'I do already love God, as God above myself;' but only, 'I would so love him, and I would be so changed, as may dispose me so to love him; I acknowledge that I should so love him, and that I do love him, for his mercies to myself and others.' Neither can it be said, that 'Volo velle,' or 'Volo amare,' a desire to love God as such, is direct love to God. Because, it is not all one, to have God to be the object of my will, and to have my own act of willing or loving to be the object of it. And because that a man may for other ends (as for mere fear of hell) will to will or love that, which yet he doth not will or love, at least for itself.

(15.) In this case above all others, it is manifest, that every conviction of the understanding doth not accordingly determine the will. For in this new convert, the understanding saith plainly, 'God is to be loved as God, above my-

self :’ but the will saith, ‘ I cannot do it though I would : I am so captivated by self-love, and so void of the true love of God, that I can say no more, but that ‘ *Propter me vellem amare Deum propter se* ;’ I love my own felicity so well, that I love God as my felicity ; and love him under the notion of God the perfect good, who is infinitely better than myself ; and desire a heart to love him more than myself ; but I cannot say, that I yet do it, or that I love him best or most, whom I acknowledge to be best, and as such to be loved.

(16.) Yet in all this, there is not only ‘ *semen amoris*,’ a seed of divine love to God as God, but the foundation of it laid, and some obscure, secret conception of it beginning, or ‘ *in fieri*,’ in the soul. For while the understanding confesseth God to be most amiable, and the will desireth that felicity which doth consist in loving him above myself, and experience telleth me, that he is good to me, and therefore good in himself, it can hardly be conceived, but that in all this there is some kind of secret love to God, as better than myself.

87. In all this, note, that it is one thing to love God, under the notion of the infinite good, better than myself and all things, and another thing for the will to love him more, as that notion obligeth.

88. And the reason why these are often separated, is, because besides a slight intellectual apprehension, there is necessary to the will’s just determination, a clear and deep apprehension, with a right disposition of the will, and a suscitation of the active power.

89. Yea, and every slight volition or velleity will not conquer opposing concupiscence and volitions : nor is every will effectual to command the life, and prevail against its contrary.

90. Therefore, I conceive, that in our first believing in Christ, even to justification, though our reason tell us that he is more amiable than ourselves, and we are desirous so to love him for the future, and have an obscure, weak beginning of love to God as God, or as so conceived : yet, 1. The strength of sensitive self-love, maketh our love to ourselves more passionately strong. 2. And that reason, at least in its degree of apprehension, is too intense in appre-

hending our self-interest, and too remiss in apprehending the amiableness of God as God: and so far, even our rational love is yet greater to ourselves, though, as to the notion, God hath the preeminence. 3. And that in this whole affair of our baptismal covenanting, consent, or Christianity, our love to our own felicity, as such, is more powerful and effectual, in moving the soul, and prevailing for our resolution for a new life, than is our love to God, as for himself, and as God.

91. And therefore it is, that fear hath so great a hand in our first change: for all that such fear doth, it doth as moved by self-love; I mean the fear of suffering and damnation: and yet experience telleth us, that conversion commonly beginneth in fear. And though where self-love and fear are alone, without the love of God as good in and for himself, there is no true grace; yet I conceive that there is true grace initial in those weak Christians, that have more fear and self-love in the passionate and powerful part, than love to God, so be it they have not more love to sin, and to any thing that stands in competition with God.

92. Therefore, he that hath a carnal self-love (or inordinate) inclining him to the creature, which is stronger in him than the love of God, is graceless: because it will turn his heart and life from God. But he that hath only a necessary self-love, even a love to his own spiritual, eternal felicity, operating by strong desire and fear, conjunct with a weaker degree of love to God as good in himself, I think hath grace, and may so be saved: because here is but an unequal motion to the same end, and not a competition.

93. If any dislike any of this decision, I only desire him to remember, that on both hands there are apparent rocks to be avoided. First, It is a dangerous thing to say that a man is in a state of grace and salvation, who loveth not God as God, that is, better than himself. And on the other hand, the experience of most Christians in the world saith, that at their first believing (if not long after), they loved God more for themselves, than for himself, and loved themselves more than God, though they knew that God was better and more amiable; and that the fear of misery, and the desire of their own salvation, were more effectual and prevalent with them, than that love of God for himself. And I doubt, that not

very many have this at all, in so high a degree as to be clear and certain of it. And if we shall make that necessary to salvation, which few of the best Christians find in themselves, we either condemn almost all professed Christians, or at least leave them under uncertainty and terrors. Therefore, God's interest speaking so loud on one hand, and man's experience on the other, I think we have need to cut by a thread, and walk by line, with greatest accurateness.

94. By this time we may see, that, as Christ is the way to the Father, and the Saviour and recoverer of lapsed man from himself to God; so faith in Christ, as such, is a mediate and medicinal grace and work: and that faith is but the bellows of love: and that our first believing in Christ, though it be the regenerating work, which generateth love, yet is but a middle state, between an unregenerate and a regenerate: not as a third state specifically distinct from both, but as the 'initium' of the latter; or, as the embryo, or state of conception in the womb, is, as to a man and no man. Faith containeth love 'in fieri.'

95. As the love of ourselves doth most powerfully (though not only,) move us to close with Christ as our Saviour, so, while hereby we are united unto him, we have a double assistance or influx from him, for the production of the purer love of God. The one is objective, in all the Divine demonstrations of God's love; in his incarnation, life, death, resurrection; in his doctrine, example, intercession; and in all his benefits given us; in our pardon, adoption, and the promises of future glory. The other is in the secret operations of the Holy Spirit, which he giveth us to concur with these means, and make them all effectual.

96. The true state of sanctification, as different from mere vocation and faith, consisteth in this pure love of God and holiness; and that more for himself and his infinite goodness, than for ourselves, and as our felicity.

97. Therefore, when we are promised the Spirit, to be given to us if we believe in Christ, and sanctification is promised us, with justification, on this condition of faith, this is part of the meaning of that promise;—that, if we truly take Christ for our Saviour, to bring us to the love of God, though at present we are most moved with the love of ourselves to accept him, he will, by his Word, works, and Spirit,

bring us to it, initially here, and perfectly in heaven ; even to be perfectly pleased in God, for his own perfect goodness, and so to be fully pleasant to him. And thus (besides the extraordinary gifts to a few,) the Spirit of holiness or love, which is the Spirit of adoption, is promised by covenant to all believers.

98. Accordingly, this promise is so fulfilled, that in the first instant of time we have a relative right to Christ, as our head and the sender of the Spirit, and to the Holy Spirit himself as our Sanctifier by undertaking, according to the terms of the covenant. But this doth not produce always a sensible or effectual love of God above ourselves in us, at the first, but by degrees, as we follow the work of faith in our practice.

99. For it is specially to be noted, that the doctrinal or objective means of love, which Christ doth use, and his internal, spiritual influx do concur. And his way is not to work on us by his Spirit alone, without those objects, nor yet by the objects without the Spirit, nor by both distinctly and dividedly, as producing several effects ; but by both conjunctly for the same effect : the Spirit's influx causing us effectually to improve the objects and reasons of our love ; as the hand that useth the seal, and the seal itself make one impression.

100. As Christ began to win our love to God by the excitation of our self-love, multiplying and revealing God's mercies to ourselves, so doth he much carry it on to increase the same way. For while every day addeth fresh experience of the greatness of God's love to us, by this we have a certain taste that God is love, and good in himself ; and so by degrees we learn to love him more for himself, and to improve our notional esteem of his essential goodness into practical.

101. Though faith itself is not wrought in us, without the Holy Ghost, nor is it (if sincere) a common gift, yet this operation of the Spirit drawing us to Christ, by such arguments and means as are fitted to the work of believing, is different from the consequent covenant-right to Christ and the Spirit, which is given to believers, and from the Spirit of adoption, as recovering us, as aforesaid, to the love of
ed.

102. In this last sense it is that the Holy Ghost is said to dwell in believers, and to be the new name, the pledge, the earnest, the first-fruits of life eternal, the witness of our right to Christ and life, and Christ's agent and witness in us, to maintain his cause and interest.

103. Even as a man, that by sickness hath lost his appetite to meat, is told that such a physician will cure him, if he will take a certain medicinal food that he will give him; and at first he taketh it without appetite to the food or medicine in itself, but merely for the love of health; but after he is doubly brought to love it for itself; first, because he hath tasted the sweetness of that which he did but see before, and next, because his health and appetite are recovered: so is it with the soul, as to the love of God procured by believing; when we have tasted through the persuasion of self-love, our taste and recovery cause us to love God for himself.

104. When the soul is risen to this habitual, predominant love of God and holiness as such, for their own goodness, above its own felicity as such, (though ever in conjunction with it, and as his felicity itself;) then is the law written in the heart; and this love is the virtual fulfilling of all the law. And for such it is that it is said, that the law is not made; that is, in that measure that they love the good for itself, they need not be moved to it with threats or promises of extrinsic things, which work but by self-love and fear. Not but that Divine authority must concur with love to produce obedience, especially while love is but imperfect: but that love is the highest principle, making the commanded good connatural to us.

105. And I think it is this Spirit of adoption and love which is called 'The Divine nature' in us, as it inclineth us to love God and holiness for themselves, as nature is inclined to self-love, and to food, and other necessities. Not that the specific, essential nature, that is, substance or form of the soul is changed, and man deified, and he become a god, that was before a man; but his human soul or nature is elevated or more perfected (as a sick man by health, or a blind man by his sight,) by the Spirit of God inclining him habitually to God himself, as in and for himself. (And this is all which the publisher of Sir H. Vane's notions of the two covenants

and two natures, can soundly mean, and seemeth to grope after.)

106. By all this you see, that as the love of God hath a double self-love in us to deal with, so it dealeth variously with each: 1. Sensual, inordinate self-love it destroyeth; both as it consisteth in the inordinate love of sensual pleasure, and in the inordinate love of self or life. 2. Lawful and just self-love it increaseth and improveth to our further good, but subjecteth it to the highest, purest love of God.

107. By this you may gather what a confirmed Christian is, even one in whom the pure love of God as God, and all things for God, is predominant, and more potent than (not only the vicious, but also) the good, and lawful, and necessary love of himself.

108. Though Christians therefore must study themselves, and keep up a care of their own salvation, yet must they much more study God, his greatness, wisdom, and goodness, as shining in his works and Word, and in his Son, and as foreseen in the heavenly glory: and in this knowledge of God and Christ is life eternal. And nothing more tendeth to the holy advancement and perfection of the soul, than to keep continually due apprehensions of the Divine nature, properties, and glorious appearances in his works upon the soul, so as it may become a constant course of contemplation, and the habit and constitution of the mind, and the constant guide of heart and life.

109. The attainment of this would be a taste of heaven on earth: our wills would follow the will of God, and rest therein, and abhor reluctancy: all our duty would be both quickened and sweetened with love: self-interest would be disabled from either seducing us to sin, or vexing us with griefs, cares, fears, or discontents. We should so far trust soul and body in the will and love of God, as to be more comforted that both are at his will, than if they were absolutely at our own. And God being our all, the constant, fixing, satisfying object of our love, our souls would be constantly fixed and satisfied, and live in such experience of the sanctifying grace of Christ, as would most powerfully conquer our unbelief; and in such foretastes of heaven, as would make life sweet, death welcome, and heaven unspeakably desirable to us. But it is not the mere love of personal

goodness, as our own perfection, that would do all this upon us.

110. The soul that is troubled with doubts, whether he love God as God, or only as a means of his own felicity, in subordination to self-love, must thus resolve his doubts.— If you truly believe that God is God, that is, the efficient, dirigent, and final cause, the just end of every rational agent, the Infinite Good, and chiefly to be loved, in comparison of whom you are vile, contemptible, and as nothing; if you feelingly take yourself as loathsome by sin; if you would not take up with an everlasting sensual pleasure alone, without holiness, if you could have it; no, nor with any perfection of your intellectual nature, merely as such, and for yourselves, without the pleasing and glorifying God in it; if you practically perceive that every thing is therefore, and so far, good and amiable, as God shineth in it as its cause, or as it conduceth to glorify him, and please his will; if, accordingly, you love that person best, on whom you perceive most of God, and that is most serviceable to him, though not at all beneficial to yourself; if you love the welfare of the church, the kingdom, the world, and of the heavenly society, saints, angels, and Christ, as the Divine nature, interest, image, or impress maketh all lovely in their several degrees; and would rather be annihilated, were it put upon your choice, than saints, angels, kingdoms, church should be annihilated; if your hearts have devoted themselves, and all that you have to God, as his own, to be used to his utmost service; if your chief desire and endeavour in the world be to please his blessed will; and in that will, and the contemplation of his infinite perfections, you seek your rest; if you desire your own everlasting happiness, in no other kind, but as consisting in the perfect sight of God's glory, and in your perfect loving of him, and being pleasant or beloved to him; and this as resting more in the infinite amiableness of God, than the felicity which hence will follow to yourselves, though that also must be desired; if now you deny your own glory for his own glory; if your chief desire and endeavour be to love him more and more; and you love yourselves best, when you love him most; in a word, if nothing more take up your care than how to love God more; and nothing in the whole world (yourself

or others) seem more amiable to your sober, practical judgment, and your wills, than the infinite goodness of God as such;—if all this be so, you have not only attained sincerity, (which is not now the question,) but this Divine nature, and high, confirmed holiness; though, withal, you never so much desire your own salvation, which is but to desire more of this love; and though your nature have such a sensitive, selfish desire of life and pleasure, as is brought into subjection to this Divine love.

If any be offended that so many propositions must be used in opening the case, and say that they rather confound men's wits than inform them; I answer, 1. The matter is high, and I could not ascend by a shorter ladder. Nor have I the faculty of climbing it 'per saltum,' stepping immediately from the lowest to the highest part. If any will make the case plainer in fewer words, and with less ado, I shall thankfully accept his labour as a very great benefit when I see it. 2. Either all these particulars are really diverse, and really pertinent to the matter in question, or not: If not, it is not blaming the number that will evince it, but naming such particulars as are either unjustly or unnecessarily distinguished or inserted. And if it be but repeating the same things that is blamed, I shall be glad if all these words and more, would make such weighty cases clear; and do confess that, after all, I need more light, and am almost stalled with the difficulties myself. But if the particulars can be neither proved false nor needless, but the reader be only overset with multitude, I would entreat him to be patient with other men, that are more laborious and more capable of knowledge: and let him know, that if his difficulties do not rather engage him in a diligent search, than tempt him to impatience and accusation, I number him, not only with the slothful contemners, but therefore also, with the enemies of knowledge; even as I reckon the neglecters, and contemners, and accusers of piety among its enemies.

But ere I end, I must answer some objections.

Object. 1. Some will say, 'Doth not every man love God above himself and all, while he knoweth him to be better, and so more lovely? For there is some act of the will, that answereth this of the understanding.'

Answer. You must know that the carnal mind is first cap-

tivated to carnal self and sensuality: and therefore, the most practical and powerful apprehensions of goodness or amiableness, in every such person, do fasten upon life and pleasure, or sensual prosperity. And the sense having here engaged the mind and will, the contrary conclusions that God is best, are but superficial and ineffectual, like dreams; and though they have answerable effects in the will, they are but ineffectual velleities or wishes, which are borne down with far stronger desires of the contrary. And though God be loved as one that is notionally conceived to be best and most to be loved, yet he is not loved best or most. Yea, though ordinarily the understanding say God is best, and best to me, and for me, and most to be loved; when it cometh to volition or choice, there is a secret apprehension, which saith more powerfully, 'hic et nunc' this sensible pleasure is better for me, and more eligible. Why else is it chosen? Unless you will say that the motion is principally sensitive, and the force of the sensitive appetite suspendeth all forcible opposition of the intellect, and so ruleth the locomotive faculty itself. But whether the intellect be active, or but omissive in it, the sin cometh up to the same height of evil. However it be, it is most evident, that, while such men say God is most to be loved, they love him not most, when they will not leave a lust or known sin for his love; nor shew any such love, but the contrary, in their lives.

Object. II. 'But do not all men practically love God best, when they love wisdom, honesty, and goodness in all men? Even in strangers that will never profit them? And what is God but wisdom, goodness, and greatness themselves?'

Ans. They first idolize themselves and their sensual delights; and then they love such wisdom, goodness, and greatness, as are suitable to their selfish, sensual lust and interest. And it is not the prime good, which is above them, and to be preferred before them, which they love as such, but such goodness as is fitted to their fleshly concupiscence and ends. And therefore, holiness they love not. And though they love that which is never like to benefit them, that is but as it is of the same kind with that which, in others nearer them, may benefit them, and therefore is suitable to their minds and interest. And yet we confess that the mind of man hath some principles of virtue, and some

footsteps and witnesses of a Deity left upon it; but though these work up to an approbation of good, and a dislike of evil, in the general notion of it, and in particular so far as it crosseth not their lust, yet never to prefer the best things practically before their lust; and God is not loved best, nor as God, if he be not loved better than fleshly lust.

Object. III. 'But it seems that most or all men love God practically best. For there are few, if any, but would rather be annihilated, than there should be no God, or no world. Therefore they love God better than themselves.'

Ans. 1. They know that if there were no God or no world, they could not be themselves, and so must also be annihilated. 2. But suppose that they would rather be annihilated, than continue in prosperity alone, were it possible, without a God, that is but for the world's sake, because the world cannot be the world without a God; which proveth but that they are so much men, as to love the whole world better than themselves. But could the world possibly be what it is, without a God, I scarce think they would choose annihilation, rather than that there should be no God. 3. But suppose they would, yet I say that some sensual men love their lusts or sensuality, better than their being; and had rather be annihilated for ever, so they might but spend their lives in pleasure, than to live for ever without those pleasures. And therefore they will say, that a short life with pleasure, is better than a long one without it. And when they profess to believe the life to come, and the danger of sinning; yet will they not leave their sinful pleasures to save their souls. Therefore, that man that would rather be annihilated than there should be no God, may yet love his lusts better than God, though not his being. 4. And I cannot say that every one shall be saved, that loveth God under a false idea or image better than himself: no more than that it will save a distracted, melancholy, venereous lover, if he loved his paramour or mistress better than himself. For God is not loved as God, if he be not loved as infinitely great, and wise, and good, which containeth his holiness, and also as the Owner, and Holy Governor and End of man. If any therefore should love God upon conceit that God loveth him, and will indulge him in his sins; or if he love him only for his greatness, and as the fountain

of all natural, sensible good ; and love him not as holy, nor as a holy and just Governor and End, it is not God indeed that this man loveth ; or he loveth him but ‘ *secundum quid* ;’ and not as God.

Object. iv. ‘ But suppose I should love God above all, as he is only great, and wise, and good in the production of all sensible, natural good, without the notion of holiness, and hatred of sin, would not this love itself be holy and saving ?’

Answer. Your love would be no holier or better, than the object of it is conceived to be. If you conceive not of God as holy and pure, you cannot love him with a pure and holy love. If you conceive of him but as the cause of sun and moon, light and heat, and life and health, and meat and drink, you will love him but with such a love as you have to these : which will not separate you from any sin as such, but will consist with all sensuality of heart and life. And it is not all in God, that nature, in its corrupted state, doth hate, or is fallen out with : but if you love him not so well as your lusts and pleasure, nor love him as your most holy Governor and End, you love him not as God, or but ‘ *secundum quid* ;’ but if you love him holily, you love him as holy.

Object. v. ‘ God himself loveth the substance or person more than the holiness ; for he continueth the persons of men and devils, when he permitteth the holiness to perish, or giveth it not.’

Answer. As the existence and event, and the moral goodness must be distinguished ; so must God’s mere volition of event, and his complacency in good as good. God doth not will the existence of a reasonable soul in a stone or straw ; and yet it followeth not, that he loveth a stone or straw for its substance, better than reason in a man : for though God willeth to make his creatures various in degrees of goodness, and taketh it to be good so to do, and that every creature be not of the best ; yet still this goodness of them is various, as one hath more excellency in it than another. The goodness of the whole may require that each part be not best in itself, and yet best respectively in order to the beauty of the whole. As a peg is not better than a standard, and yet is better to the building in its place ; and a finger is not better

than a head, and yet is better to the body in its place, than another head would be in that place. The head therefore must be loved comparatively better than the finger, and the finger may be cut off to save life, when the head must not: so God can see meet to permit men and devils to fall into misery, and thieves to be hanged, and use this to the beauty of the whole, and yet love a true man better than a thief, and a good better than a bad.

And either you speak of goodness or holiness existent or non-existent. In a devil there is substance, which is good in its natural kind, and therefore so far loved of God; but there is no holiness in him, and that which is not, is not amiable: but if you mean existent holiness, in a saint, then it is false that God loveth the person of a devil better than the holiness of a saint. Nor is it a proof that he loveth them equally, because he equally willeth their existence; for he willeth not they shall be equal in goodness, though equally existent: and it is complacency, and not mere volition of existence, which we mean by love.

Otherwise your arguing is as strong as if it run thus: that which God bringeth to pass, and not another thing, he willeth and loveth more than that other; but God bringeth to pass men's sickness, pain, death, and damnation, and not the holiness, ease, or salvation of those persons: therefore he loveth their pain, death, and damnation better than their holiness: therefore we should love them better, than the devils or miserable men should love their misery better, than holiness. God sheweth what he loveth, oft by commanding it, when he doth not effect it; he loveth holiness 'in esse cognito,' and 'in esse existente,' respectively as his image.

Object. 'But at least it will follow, that in this or that person as the devils, God loveth the substance better than holiness; for what he willeth he loveth: but he willeth the substance without the holiness; therefore he loveth the substance without the holiness.'

Ans. It is answered already. Moreover, 1. God willed that holiness should be the duty of all men and devils, though he willed not insuperably and absolutely to effect it. 2. The word 'without' meaneth either an exclusion or a mere non-inclusion. God willeth not the person excluding holiness: for he excludeth it not by will or work; but

only he willeth the person, not including the holiness as to any absolute will. And so God loveth the person without the holiness ; but not so much as he would love him if he were holy.

Object. ‘ But you intimate, that it is best as to the beauty of the universe, that there be sin, and unholiness, and damnation ; and God loveth that which is good as to the universe, yea, that is a higher good than personal good, as the subject is more noble, and therefore more to be loved of us as it is of God.’

Answ. 1. I know Augustine is oft alleged as saying, ‘ Bonum est ut malum fiat.’ But sin and punishment must be distinguished : it is true of punishment presupposing sin, that it is good and lovely, in respect to public ends, though hurtful to the person suffering ; and therefore as God willeth it as good, so should we not only be patient, but be pleased in it as it is the demonstration of the justice and holiness of God, and as it is good, though not as it is our hurt. But sin (or unholiness privative) is not good in itself, nor to the universe : nor is it a true saying, that ‘ It is good that there be sin ;’ nor is it willed of God, (though not nilled with an absolute, effective nolition) as hath been elsewhere opened at large. Sin is not good to the universe, nor any part of the beauty of the creature : God neither willeth it, causeth it, nor loveth it.

Object. ‘ At least he hath no great love to holiness in those persons, that he never giveth it to : otherwise he would work it in them.’

Answ. He cannot love that existent which existeth not. Nor doth he any further will to give it them than to command it, and give them all necessary means and persuasions to it. But what if God make but one sun, will you say that he hath no great love to a sun, that will make no more ? What if he make no more worlds ? Doth that prove that he hath no great love to a world ? He loveth the world, the sun, and so the saints, which he hath made : and he doth not so far love suns, or worlds, or saints, as to make as many suns, or worlds, or saints as foolish wits would prescribe unto him. Our question is, What being God loveth, and we should most love, as being best and likest him, and not what he should give a being to that is not.

Object. vi. ‘Holiness is but an accident, and the person is the substance, and better than the accident; and Dr. Twiss oppugneth, on such accounts, the saying of Arminius, That God loveth justice better than just men, because it is for justice that he loveth them.’

Ans. Aristotle and Porphyry have not so clearly made known to us the nature of those things or modes which they are pleased to call accidents, as that we should lay any great stress upon their sayings about them. Another will say that goodness itself is but an accident, and most will call it a mode; and they will say that the substance is better than the mode or accident, and therefore better than goodness itself. And would this, think you, be good arguing? Distinguish then between physical goodness of being, in the soul, both as a substance, and as a formal virtue; and the perfective, or modal, qualitative or gradual goodness; and then consider, that the latter always presupposeth the former: where there is holiness, there is the substance, with its physical goodness, and the perfective, modal, or moral goodness too; but where there is no holiness, there is only a substance deprived of its modal, moral goodness. And is not both better than one, and a perfect being than an imperfect?

And as to Arminius’s saying, He cannot mean that God loveth righteousness with a subject or substance, better than a subject without righteousness; for there is no such thing to love (as righteousness without a subject, though there may be an abstract, distinct conception of it). If therefore the question be only, Whether God love the same man better, as he is a man, or as he is a saint, I answer, he hath a love to each which is suitable to its kind. He hath such complacency in the substance of a serpent, a man, a devil, as is agreeable to their being; that is, as they bear the natural impressions of his creating perfections, yet such as may stand with their pain, death, and misery. But he hath such a complacency in the actual holiness, love, and obedience of men and angels, as that he taketh the person that hath them, to be meet for his service, and glory, and everlasting felicity, and delight in him, as being qualified for it. So that God’s love must be denominatively distinguished from the object; and so it is a love of nature, and a love of the moral perfections of nature: the first love is that by

which he loveth a man because he is a man, and so all other creatures ; the second love is that by which he loveth a good man, because he is good or holy. And if it will comfort you, that God loveth your being without your perfections or virtue, let it comfort you in pain, and death, and hell, that he continueth your being without your well-being or felicity.

Object. VII. ‘ All goodness or holiness is some one’s goodness or holiness (as health is). And as it is the person’s welfare and perfection, so it is given for the person’s sake : therefore the person, as the ‘ *finis cui*,’ and utmost end, is better than the thing given him, and so more amiable.’

Ans. That all goodness is some one’s goodness, proveth but that some one is the subject or being that is good, but not that to be, is better than to be good, as such. And as he is in some respect the ‘ *finis cui*,’ for whom it is, and so it is good to him ; yet he and his goodness are for a higher end, which is the pleasing of God in the demonstration of his goodness : that therefore is best which most demonstrateth God’s goodness. And there is no subject or substance without its accidents or modes ; and that person that is not good and holy, is bad and unholy. Therefore the question should be, Whether a person bad and unholy, be more amiable than a person good and holy, that hath both physical and moral goodness. And for all that the name of an accident maketh action seem below the person ; yet it must be also said, that the person and his faculties are for action, as being but the substance in a perfect mode, and that action is for higher ends than the person’s being or felicity.

Object. VIII. ‘ Love is nothing but benevolence, ‘ *velle bonum alicui ut ei bene sit*.’ But who is it that would not wish good to God, that is, to be blessed as he is ? But how can holiness then be loved, but rather the person for his holiness ; because we cannot wish it good, but only to be what it is.’

Ans. 1. The definition is false, as hath been shewed, and as the instance proveth ; else a man could not be said to love learning, virtue, or any quality, but only to love the person that wanteth it, or hath it. But love is a complacency, and benevolence is but its effect or antecedent. 2. The unholy wish not good to God, for they would all depose him from his Godhead : they would not have him to be a

hater of their sin, nor to be their holy and righteous Governor and Judge.

Object. ix. ‘It is better to be a man, though a sinner and miserable in hell, than not to be at all. Else God would never ordain, cause, or permit it.’

Answ. It is better to the highest ends, God’s glory, and the universal order, to be a punished man, than to be nothing (when God will have it so); because punishment, as to those highest ends, is good: though it is not best for the poor miserable sinner; but the same cannot be said of sin. It is indeed better also to those highest ends, to be a man though a sinner (while God continueth humanity): for the latter implieth some good to be in the sin which hath no good, and therefore God neither causeth it, nor willeth it, though he permit it. But though a sinful man is better than no man to God’s ends, it followeth not, that to be a man is better than to be a good man.

Object. x. ‘If that be best and most amiable which is most to the glory of God, then it is more amiable to be a sinner in hell torment glorifying his justice, than not to be at all, or to be a brute.’

Answ. It is neither of these that is offered to your love and choice, but to be holy. All good is not matter of election; but that good which is in hell is not the sin, but the punishment. For the sin doth reputatively, and as much as in it lieth rob God of his glory, and punishment repaireth it. Therefore love the punishment if you can, and spare not, so you love holiness better; for that would honour God more excellently, and please him more.

Object. xi. ‘If I must love to be like God, I must love to be great, and I must love the greatest as most like him.’

Answ. You must love to be like him in those perfections which you are capable of, and to the ends and uses of your proper nature: therefore you must be desirous to be like him in your measure, even in such power and greatness as are suitable to the nature and ends of a rational soul. Not in such strength as he giveth a horse, or such magnitude as he giveth a mountain, which is not to be most like him; but in the vital activity and power of an intellectual free-agent: to be powerful and great in love to God and all his service,

and in all good works, to be profitable to the world ; to be lively and ready in all obedience, strong to suffer, and to conquer sin and all temptations : in a word, to be great and powerful in wisdom and true goodness. Thus seek even in power to be like to God in your capacities.

Object. XII. ‘ God himself doth not love men only for their goodness, nor love that best which is best. For he loveth his elect while enemies and ungodly ; and he telleth Israel he loved them because he would love them, and not because they were better than others ; and in the womb he loved Jacob best, when he was no better than Esau.’

Answ. 1. Distinguish between God’s complacence and benevolence. 2. Between the good that is present, and foreseen good with a present capacity for it.

1. God had a greater benevolence to Jacob than Esau, and the Israelites than to other nations that were perhaps not much worse. And it is not for our goodness that God decreeth to make us good, or to give us a double proportion of any of those mercies, which he giveth not as Rector but as ‘ Dominus ’ and Benefactor, as an absolute owner and free benefactor. And with this love of benevolence he loveth us, when we are his enemies, that is, he purposeth to make us good ; but this benevolence is but a secondary love and fruit of complacency, joined with the free, unequal distribution of his own.

2. But for complacency, which is love in the first and strictest sense, God so loveth the wicked though elect, no farther than they are good and lovely, that is, (1.) As they have the natural goodness of rational creatures : (2.) And as they are capable of all the future service they will do him, and glory they will bring him ; (3.) And as his infinite wisdom knoweth it fit to choose them to that service. Or, if the benevolence of election do go before his first complacence in them above others, as being before his foresight that they will serve and love him better, yet still this proper love called complacence, goeth not beyond the worth of the thing loved.

Object. ‘ Doth God love us complacentially in Christ, beyond the good that is in us ?’

Answ. Not beyond our real and relative good, as we are in ourselves, by his grace, and as we are in Christ related to

him, and both ways such as demonstrate the Divine perfections, and shall love, and glorify, and please him for ever.

So much for the opening of the true nature of love to God, ourselves, and others, and of man's ultimate end, and of the nature of holiness and goodness, and those mysteries of religion which are involved in these points.

CHAPTER IV.

Subordinate Directions against those Grand Heart-Sins, which are directly contrary to the Life of Godliness and Christianity.

THE positive Directions to the Essential Duties of Godliness and Christianity, have already given you Directions against the contrary sins : as in the first Grand Direction you have helps against direct unbelief : in the second, you have Directions against unbelief, as it signifieth the not using and applying of Christ according to our various needs. In the third, you have Directions against^a all resisting or neglecting the Holy Ghost : (which were first, because in practice we must come by the Son and the Spirit to the saving knowledge and love of the Father.) In the fourth, you have Directions^b against atheism, idolatry, and ungodliness. In the fifth, you have Directions against self-idolizing, and self-dependence, and unholiness in an alienating yourselves from God. In the sixth, you are directed against rebellion and disobedience against God. In the seventh, you have Directions against unteachableness, ignorance, and error. In the eighth, you have Directions against impenitency, unhumbleness, impurity, unreformedness, and all sin in general as sin. In the ninth, you are directed against^c security, unwatchfulness, and yielding to temptations, and in general against all danger to the soul. In the tenth, you

^a Of the Sin against the Holy Ghost, I have written a special Treatise in my "Unreasonableness of Infidelity."

^b Since the writing of this, I have published the same more at large, in my "Reasons of the Christian Religion," and in my "Life of Faith."

^c Of presumption and false hope, enough is said in the "Saints' Rest," and here about temptation, hope, and other heads afterwards.

are directed against barrenness, unprofitableness, and sloth, and uncharitableness; and against mistakes in matter of duty or good works. In the eleventh, you are directed against all averseness, disaffection, or cold indifferency of heart to God. In the twelfth, you are directed against distrust, and sinful cares, and fears, and sorrows. In the thirteenth, you are directed against an over sad or heartless serving of God, as merely from fear, or forcedly, without delight. In the fourteenth, you are directed against unthankfulness. In the fifteenth, you are directed against all unholy or dishonourable thoughts of God, and against all injurious speeches of him, or barrenness of the tongue, and against all scandal or barrenness of life. In the books referred to in the sixteenth and seventeenth, you are directed against selfishness, self-esteem, self-love, self-conceit, self-will, self-seeking, and against all worldliness, and fleshliness of mind or life. But yet, lest any necessary helps should be wanting against such heinous sins, I shall add some more particular Directions against such of them as were not fully spoken to before.

PART I.

Directions against Unbelief.

I KNOW that most poor, troubled Christians, when they complain of the sin of Unbelief, do mean by it, their not believing that they are sincere believers, and personally justified, and shall be saved. And I know that some divines have affirmed, that the sense of that article of the creed, 'I believe the remission of sins,' is, 'I believe my sins are actually forgiven.' But the truth is, to believe that I am elect or justified, or that my sins are forgiven, or that I am a sincere believer, is not to believe any Word of God at all: for no Word of God doth say any of these; nor any thing equivalent; nor any thing out of which it can be gathered: for it is a rational conclusion; and one of the premises which does infer it, must be found in myself by reflection, or internal sense, and self-knowledge. The Scripture only saith, "He that truly believeth is justified, and shall be saved." But it is conscience, and not belief of Scripture, which

must say, 'I do sincerely believe :' therefore the conclusion, 'that I am justified, and shall be saved,' is a rational collection from what I find in Scripture and in myself, set together, and resulting from both, can be no firmer or surer than is the weaker of the premises. Now certainty is objective or subjective ; in the thing, or in my apprehension. As to objective certainty in the thing itself, all truths are equally true ; but all truths are not equally discernible, there being more cause of doubting concerning some, which are less evident, than concerning others, which are more evident. And so the truth of God's promise of justification to believers, is more certain ; that is, hath fuller, surer evidence to be discerned by, than the truth of my sincere believing. And 'that I sincerely believe,' is the more debile of the premises, and therefore the conclusion followeth this in its debility ; and so can be no article of faith. And as to the subjective certainty, that varieth according to men's various apprehensions. The premises, as in their evidence or aptitude to ascertain us, are the cause of the conclusion as evident, or knowable. And the premises, as apprehended, are the cause of the conclusion, as known.

Now it is a great doubt with some, Whether a man can possibly be more certain that he believeth, than he is that the thing believed is true ; because the act can extend no farther than the object : and to be sure I believe, is but to be sure that I take the thing believed to be true. But I shall grant the contrary, that a man may possibly be surer that he believeth, than he is that the thing believed is true ; because my believing is not always a full subjective certainty, that the thing is true ; but a believing that it is true. And though you are fully certain that all God's Word is true ; yet you may believe that this is his Word, with some mixture of unbelief or doubting. And so the question is but this, Whether you may not certainly, without doubting know, that you believe the Word of God to be true, though with some doubting. And it seems you may. But then it is a further question, Whether you can be surer of the saving sincerity of your faith, than you are that this Word of God is true. And that ordinary men doubt of the first, as much as they doubt of the latter, I think is an experimented truth. But yet grant that with some it may be

otherwise, (because he believeth sincerely, that so far believeth the Word of God, as to trust his life and soul upon it, and forsake all in obedience to it: and that I do so, I may know with less doubting, than I yet have about the truth of the Word so believed,) all that will follow is but this, that of those men that doubt of their justification and salvation, some of their doubts are caused more by their doubting of God's Word, than by their doubting whether they sincerely, though doubtfully believe it: and the doubts of others, whether they are justified and shall be saved, are caused much more by their doubting of their own sincere belief, than by their doubting of the truth of Scriptures. And the far greatest number of Christians seem to themselves to be of this latter sort. For no doubt, but though a man of clear understanding can scarcely believe, and yet not know that he believeth; yet he may believe sincerely, and not know that he believeth sincerely. But still the knowledge of our own justification, is but the effect or progeny of our belief of the Word of God, and of our knowledge that we do sincerely believe it, which conjunctly are the parents and causes of it: and it can be no stronger than the weaker of the parents, (which 'in esse cognoscibili' is our faith, but 'in esse cognito' is sometimes the one, and sometimes the other.) And the effect is not the cause; the effect of faith and knowledge conjunct, is not faith itself. It is not a believing the Word of God, to believe that you believe, or that you are justified: but yet, because that faith is one of the parents of it, some call it by the name of faith, though they should call it but an effect of faith, as one of the causes. And well may our doubtings of our own salvation be said to be from unbelief, because unbelief is one of the causes of them, and the sinfulness cause.

And that the article of remission of sin is to be believed with application to ourselves, is certain: but not with the application of assurance, persuasion, or belief that we are already pardoned; but with an applying acceptance of an offered pardon, and consent to the covenant which maketh it ours. We believe that Christ hath purchased remission of sin, and made a conditional grant of it in his Gospel, to all, viz. if they will repent, and believe in him, or take him

for their Saviour, or become penitent Christians. And we consent to do so, and to accept it on these terms: And we believe that all are actually pardoned that thus consent.

By all this you may perceive, that those troubled Christians which doubt not of the truth of the Word of God, but only of their own sincerity, and consequently of their justification and salvation, do ignorantly complain that they have not faith, or that they cannot believe: for it is no act of unbelief at all, for me to doubt whether my own heart be sincere: this is my ignorance of myself, but it is not any degree of unbelief: for God's Word doth no where say that I am sincere; and therefore I may doubt of this, without doubting of God's Word at all. And let all troubled Christians know, that they have no more unbelief in them, than they have doubting or unbelief of the truth of the Word of God. Even that despair itself, which hath none of this in it, hath no unbelief in it, (if there be any such). I thought it needful thus far to tell you what unbelief is, before I come to give you Directions against it. And though the mere doubting of our own sincerity be no unbelief at all, yet real unbelief of the very truth of the Holy Scriptures, is so common and dangerous a sin, and some degree of it is latent in the best, that I think we can no way so much further the work of grace, as by destroying this. The weakness of our faith in the truth of Scriptures, and the remnant of our unbelief of it, is the principal cause of all the languishings of our love and obedience, and every grace; and to strengthen faith, is to strengthen all. What I have more fully written in my "Saints' Rest," Part 2., and my "Treatise against Infidelity," I here suppose.

Direct. 1. 'Consider well how much of religion nature itself teacheth, and reason, (without supernatural revelation,) must needs confess: (as, that there is another life which man was made for, and that he is obliged to the fullest love and obedience to God, and the rest before laid down in the Introduction.) 'And then observe how congruously the doctrine of Christ comes in, to help where nature is at a loss, and how exactly it suits with natural truths, and how clearly it explaineth them, and fully containeth so much of them as is necessary to salvation; and how suitable and proper a means it is to attain their ends; and how great a

testimony the doctrines of nature and grace do give unto each other^d.

Direct. 11. 'Consider, that man's end being in the life to come, and God being the righteous and merciful Governor of man in order to that end, it must needs be that God will give him sufficient means to know his will in order to that

^d I must profess that the nature and wonderful difference of the godly and ungodly, and their conversation in the world, are perpetual, visible evidences in my eyes, of the truth of the Holy Scriptures.

1. That there should be so universal and implacable a hatred against the godly, in the common sort of unrenewed men, in all ages and nations of the earth, when these men deserve so well of them, and do them no wrong, is a visible proof of Adam's fall, and the need of a Saviour and a Sanctifier.

2. That all those who are seriously Christians, should be so far renewed, and recovered from the common corruption, as their heavenly minds and lives, and their wonderful difference from other men sheweth, this is a visible proof that Christianity is of God.

3. That God doth so plainly shew a particular, special providence, in the converting and confirming souls, by differencing grace, and work on the soul as the sanctified feel, doth shew that indeed the work is his.

4. That God doth so plainly grant many of his servants' prayers, by special providences, doth prove his owning them and his promises.

5. That God suffereth his servants in all times and places ordinarily to suffer so much for his love and service, from the world and flesh, doth shew that there is a judgment, and rewards, and punishments hereafter. Or else our highest duty would be our greatest loss; and then how should his government of men be just?

6. That the renewed nature (which maketh men better, and therefore is of God,) doth wholly look at the life to come, and lead us to it, and live upon it, this sheweth that such a life there is, or else this would be delusory and vain, and goodness itself would be a deceit.

7. When it is undeniable that 'de facto esse' the world is not governed without the hopes and fears of another life; almost all nations among the heathens believing it, and shewing by their very worshipping their dead heroes as gods, that they believed that their souls did live, and even the wicked generally being restrained by those hopes and fears in themselves. And also that 'de posse' it is not possible the world should be governed agreeably to man's rational nature, without the hopes and fears of another life; but men would be worse than beasts, and all villanies would be the allowed practice of the world. As every man may feel in himself what he were like to be and do, if he had no such restraint. And there being no doctrine or life comparable to Christianity, in their tendency to the life to come. All these are visible, standing evidences, assisted so much by common sense and reason, and still apparent to all, that they leave infidelity without excuse; and are ever at hand to help our faith, and resist temptations to unbelief.

8. And if the world had not had a beginning according to the Scriptures, 1. We should have found monuments of antiquity above six thousand years old. 2. Arts and sciences would have come to more perfection, and printing, guns, &c., not have been of so late invention. 3. And so much of America and other parts of the world, would not have been yet uninhabited, unplanted, or undiscovered.

Of atheism I have spoken before in the Introduction; and nature so clearly revealeth a God, that I take it as almost needless to say much of it to sober men.

end ;' and that the clearest, fullest means must needs demonstrate most of the government and mercy of God.

Direct. III. ' Consider, what full and sad experience the world hath of its pravity and great corruption ;' and that the natural tendency of reason is to those high and excellent things, which corruption and brutishness do almost extinguish or cast out with the most ; and that the prevalency of the lower faculties against right reason, is so lamentable and universal, to the confusion of the world, that it is enough to tell us, that this is not the state that God first made us in, and that certainly sin hath sullied and disordered his work. The wickedness of the world is a great confirmation of the Scripture.

Direct. IV. ' Consider, how exactly the doctrine of the Gospel, and covenant of grace, are suited to the lapsed state of man :' even as the law of works was suited to his state of innocency : so that the Gospel may be called the law of lapsed nature, as suited to it, though not as revealed by it ; as the other was the law of entire nature.

Direct. V. ' Compare the many prophecies of Christ, with the fulfilling of them in his person.' As that of Moses recited by Stephen, Acts vii. 37. Isa. liii. Dan. ix. 24—26. &c. And consider that those Jews which are the Christians' bitterest enemies, acknowledge and preserve those prophecies, and all the Old Testament, which giveth so full a testimony to the New.

Direct. VI. ' Consider, what an admirable suitableness there is in the doctrine of Christ, to the relish of a serious, heavenly mind :' and how all that is spiritual and truly good in us, doth close with it and embrace it from a certain congruity of natures, as the eye doth with the light, and the stomach with its proper food. Every good man in reading the Holy Scripture, feeleth something (even all that is good) within him, bear witness to it. And only our worse part is quarrelling with it, and rebels against it.

Direct. VII. ' Consider, how all the first churches were planted by the success of all those miracles mentioned in the Scripture.' And that the apostles and thousands of others saw the miracles of Christ : and the churches saw the miracles of the apostles, and heard them speak in languages unlearned : and had the same extraordinary gifts

communicated to themselves. And these being openly and frequently manifested, convinced unbelievers: and were openly urged by the apostles to stop the mouths of opposers, and confirm believers; who would all have scorned their arguments, and the faith which they supported, if all these had been fictions, of which they themselves were said to be eye-witnesses and agents. So that the very existence of the churches, was a testimony to the matter of fact. And what testimony can be greater of God's interest and approbation, than Christ's resurrection, and all these miracles?

Direct. VIII. 'Consider, how no one of all the heretics or apostates, did ever contradict the matters of fact, or hath left the world any kind of confutation of them,' which they wanted not malice, or encouragement, or opportunity to have done.

Direct. IX. 'Consider, how that no one of all those thousands that asserted these miracles, are ever mentioned in any history as repenting of it, either in their health, or at the hour of death:' whereas it had been so heinous a villany to have cheated the world in so great a cause, that some consciences of dying men, especially of men that placed all their hopes in the life to come, must needs have repented of.

Direct. X. 'Consider, that the witnesses of all these miracles, and all the churches that believed them, were taught by their own doctrine and experience, to forsake all that they had in the world, and to be reproached, hated, and persecuted of all men, and to be as lambs among wolves, in expectation of death; and all this for the hope of that blessedness promised them by a crucified, risen Christ.' So that no worldly end could move them to deceive, or willingly to be deceived.

Direct. XI. 'Consider, how impossible it is in itself, that so many men should agree together to deceive the world, and that for nothing, and at the rate of their own undoing and death: and that they should all agree in the same narratives and doctrines so unanimously: and that none of these should ever confess the deceit, and disgrace the rest.' All things well considered, this will appear not only a moral, but a natural impossibility: especially considering their quality and distance, there being thousands in several

countries, that never saw the faces of the rest, much less could enter a confederacy with them, to deceive the world.

Direct. XII. ‘Consider the certain way by which the doctrine and writings of the apostles, and other evangelical messengers, have been delivered down to us, without any possibility of material alteration.’ Because the Holy Scriptures were not left only to the care of private men, or of the Christians of one country, who might have agreed upon corruptions and alterations: but it was made the office of the ordinary ministers to read, and expound, and apply them. And every congregation had one or more of these ministers: and the people received the Scriptures as the law of God, and that by which they must live and be judged, and as their charter for heaven. So that it was not possible for one minister to corrupt the Scripture text, but the rest, with the people, would have quickly reprovèd him: nor for those of one kingdom to bring all other Christians to it throughout the world, without a great deal of consultation and opposition (if at all): which never was recorded to us.

Direct. XIII. ‘Be acquainted as fully as you can with the history of the church, that you may know how the Gospel hath been planted, and propagated, and assaulted, and preserved until now:’ which will much better satisfy you, than general, uncertain talk of others.

Direct. XIV. ‘Judge whether God, being the wise and merciful Governor of the world, would suffer the honestest and most obedient subjects that he hath upon earth, to be deceived in a matter of such importance, by pretence of doctrines and miracles proceeding from himself, and which none but himself (or God by his special grant) is able to do, without disowning them, or giving any sufficient means to the world to discover the deceit.’ For certainly, he needeth not deceit to govern us. If you say that he permits Mahometanism, I answer, 1. The main, positive doctrine of the Mahometans, for the worshipping of one only God, against idolatry, is true: and the by-fancies of their pretended prophet, are not commended to the world upon the pretence of attesting miracles at all, but upon the affirmation of revelations, without any credible seal or Divine attestation, and

‘Neque enim potest Deus qui summa veritas et bonitas est, humanum genus, suum decipere. Marsil. Ficin. de Rel. Chris. c. 1.’

obtruded on the world by the power of the sword. 2. And God hath given the world sufficient preservatives against them, in the nullity of the proof of them, and the evident foppery of the writings and the things themselves. So that honesty and diligence will easily escape them.

Direct. xv. 'Observe the supernatural effects of the Gospel upon the souls of believers: how it planteth on man the image of the Holy God:' powerfully subduing both sense and the greatest interest of the flesh, to the will of God; and making men wise and good; and putting an admirable difference between them, and all other men. And then judge whether it be not God's seal, having his image first upon itself, which he doth use and honour to be the instrument of imprinting his image upon us^e.

Direct. xvi. 'Mark well the certain vanity of all other religions that prevail on the earth.' Idolatry and Mahometanism, which openly bear the mark of their own shame, have shared between them almost all the rest of the earth; for mere Deism is scarce any where in possession; and Judaism hath no considerable inheritance; and both of them as sensibly confuted by man's corruption, necessity, and desert.

Direct. xvii. 'Mark the great difference between the Christian part of the world, (those that receive Christianity seriously and in sincerity,) and all the rest^f.' Those that are farthest from Christianity, are farthest from piety, honesty, civility, or any laudable parts or conversations: most of them are beastly and ungodly: and the rest are but a little better: and ignorance and brutishness cannot be the perfection of a man. Nay, among professed Christians, the multitudes that have but the name, and hate the nature and practice of it, are like swine or wolves; and some of the worst, near kin to devils. When all that receive Christianity practically into their hearts and lives, are heavenly and holy, and (in the same measure that they receive it) their sins are all mortified, and they are devoted to God, and possessed with justice, charity, and patience to men, and are carried up above this world, and contemn that which the

^e Pietas fundamentum est omnium virtutum. Cic. pro Planc. 29. Vol. iii. p. 937.

^f Zenophon reporteth Cyrus as saying, 'If all my familiars were endued with piety to God, they would do less evil to one another, and to me.' lib. viii.

rest do make their felicity and delight. So that if that be good which doth good, then is the goodness of the Christian faith, apparent to all, that have any acquaintance, reason, and impartiality to judge.

Direct. xviii. ‘Bethink you what you should have been yourselves, if you had not been Christians?’ Yea, what would yet be the consequent if you should fall from the Christian faith? Would you not look at the life to come as doubtful? And resolve to take your pleasure in the world, and to gratify the flesh, and to neglect your souls, and to venture upon almost any vice, that seemeth necessary to your carnal ends. Christianity hath cleansed and sanctified you, if you are sanctified: and if (which God forbid!) you should forsake Christianity, it is most likely you would quickly shew the difference, by your dirty, fleshly, worldly lives^s.

Direct. xix. ‘When you see the evidence of Divine revelation and authority, it is enough to silence your doubts and cavils about particular words or circumstances.’ For you know that God is true and infallible; and you know that you are silly, ignorant worms, that are utterly at a loss, when you have not one at hand to open every difficulty to you: and that all arts and sciences seem full of difficulties and contradictions to ignorant, inexperienced novices.

Direct. xx. ‘Allow all along in your learning, for the difficulties which must needs arise, from the translation, ambiguity of all human language, change and variety of words and customs, time, place, and other circumstances, and especially from your own unacquaintedness with all these:’ that so your own infirmities, and ignorance, and mistakes in reasoning, may not be ascribed to the truth.

Direct. xxi. ‘Understand the proper use of Holy Scripture, and so how far it is Divine; that so you be not tempted to unbelief, by expecting in it that which never was intended, and then finding your causeless expectations frustrate.’ It is not so Divine as to the terms, and style, and order, and such modal and circumstantial matters, as if all the exactness might be expected in it, that God could put into a book. Nor is it intended as a system of physics, or

^s Atque haud scio an pietate adversus Deos sublatâ, fides etiam, et societas generis humani, et una excellentissima virtus justitia, tollatur. Cic. de Nat. D. l. 4.

logic, or any subservient sciences or arts : but it is an infallible revelation of the will of God, for the government of the church, and the conducting men to life eternal : and it is ordered and worded so as to partake of such human infirmity, as yet shall no way impeach the truth or efficacy of it ; but rather make it more suitable to the generality of men, whose infirmity requires such a style and manner of handling. So that as a child of God hath a body from parents, which yet is of God, but so of God, as to partake of the infirmities of the parents ; or rather, as Adam had a body from God, but yet from earth, and accordingly frail ; but a soul more immediately from God, which was more pure and divine : so Scripture hath its style, and language, and method so from God ; as to have nothing in it unsuitable to its ends ; but not so from God, as if he himself had shewed in it his own most perfect wisdom to the utmost, and as if there were nothing in it of human imperfection. But the truth and goodness which are the soul of Scripture, are more immediately from God. The style and method of the penmen may be various ; but the same soul animateth all the parts. It is no dishonour to the Holy Scriptures, if Cicero be preferred for purity of style, and phrase, and oratory, as for other common uses : but certainly it is to be preferred as to its proper use : that being the best style for an act of parliament, which is next to the worst in an oration. The means are for the end.

Direct. XXII. ‘ Consider how great assistance apparitions, and witchcrafts, and other sensible evidences of spirits conversing with mankind, do give to faith.’ Of which I have written in the forementioned treatises, and therefore now pass it over.

Direct. XXIII. ‘ Consider what advantage faith may have, by observing the nature and tendency of the soul, and its hopes and fears of a life to come, together with the superior, glorious worlds, which certainly are possessed by nobler inhabitants^b.’ He that seeth every corner of the earth, and sea, and air inhabited, and thinks what earth is in comparison of all the great and glorious orbs above it, will hardly once dream that they are all void of inhabitants, or that there is not room enough for souls.

^b See my book called “ A Saint or a Brute.”

Direct. xxiv. 'The ministry of angels, of which particular providences give us a great probability, doth give some help to that doctrine which telleth us, that we must live with angels, and that we shall ascend to more familiarity with them, who condescend to so great service now for us.'

Direct. xxv. 'The universal, wonderful, implacable enmity of corrupted man to the holy doctrine, and ways, and servants of Christ, and the open war which in every kingdom, and the secret war which in every heart, is kept up between Christ and satan through the world;' with the tendency of every temptation, their violence, constancy, in all ages, to all persons, all making against Christ, and heaven, and holiness, do notoriously declare that the Christian doctrine and life do tend to our salvation; which the devil so maliciously and incessantly opposeth: and thus his temptations give great advantage to the tempted soul against the tempter. For it is not for nothing that the enemy of our souls makes so much opposition. And that there is such a devil, that thus opposeth Christ and tempteth us, not only sensible apparitions and witchcrafts prove, but the too sensible temptations, which, by their matter and manner, plainly tell us whence they come. Especially when all the world is formed as into two hostile armies, the one fighting under Christ, and the other under the devil; and so have continued since Cain and Abel to this day.

Direct. xxvi. 'The prophecies of Christ himself of the destruction of Jerusalem, and the gathering of his church, and the cruel usage of it through the world, do give great assistance to our faith, when we see them all so punctually fulfilled.'

Direct. xxvii. 'Mark whether it be not a respect to things temporal that assaulteth thy belief; and come not with a biassed, sensual mind to search into so great a mystery.' Worldliness, and pride, and sensuality are deadly enemies to faith; and where they prevail they will shew their enmity, and blind the mind: if the soul be sunk into mud and filth, it cannot see the things of God.

Direct. xxviii. 'Come with humility and a sense of your ignorance, and not with arrogance and self-conceit; as if all must needs be wrong that your empty, foolish minds cannot presently perceive to be right. The most famous

apostates that ever I knew, were all men of notorious pride and self-conceitedness.

Direct. xxix. 'Provoke not God by wilful sinning against the light, which thou hast already received, to forsake thee, and give thee over to infidelity.' "Because men receive not the love of the truth, that they might be saved; for this cause God sends them strong delusions to believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousnessⁱ." Obey Christ's doctrine so far as you know it, and you shall more fully know it to be of God^k.

Direct. xxx. 'Tempt not yourselves to infidelity, by pretended humility in abasing your natural faculties, when you should be humbled for your moral pravity.' Vilifying the soul, and its reason, and natural free-will doth tend to infidelity, by making us think that we are but as other inferior animals, incapable of a life above with God: when as self-abasing, because of the corruption of reason and free-will, doth tend to shew us the need of a physician, and so assist our faith in Christ.

Direct. xxxi. 'Judge not of so great a thing by sudden apprehensions, or the surprise of a temptation, when you have not leisure to look up all the evidences of faith, and lay them together, and take a full, deliberate view of all the cause.' It is a mystery so great as requireth a clear and vacant mind, delivered from prejudice, abstracted from diverting and deceiving things; which, upon the best assistance and with the greatest diligence, must lay altogether to discern the truth. And, if upon the best assistance and consideration, you have been convinced of the truth, and then will let every sudden thought, or temptation, or difficulty seem enough to question all again, this is unfaithfulness to the truth, and the way to resist the clearest evidences, and never to have done. It is like as if you should answer your adversary in the court, when your witnesses are all dismissed or out of the way, and all your evidences are absent, and perhaps your counsellor and advocate too. It is like the casting up of a long and intricate account, which a man hath finished by study and time; and when he hath done all, one questioneth this particular, and another that,

ⁱ 2 Thess. ii. 10—12.

^k John vii. 17. x. 4.

when his accounts are absent : it is not fit for him to answer all particulars, nor question his own accounts, till he have as full opportunity and help to cast up all again.

Direct. xxxii. ‘ If the work seem too hard for you, go and consult with the wisest, most experienced Christians ; who can easily answer the difficulties which most perplex and tempt you. Modesty will tell you, that the advantage of study and experience may make every one wisest in his own profession ; and set others above you, while you have less of these.

Direct. xxxiii. ‘ Remember that Christianity being the surest way to secure your eternal hopes ;’ and the matters of this life which cause men to forsake it, being such transitory trifles, you can be no losers by it ; and therefore if you doubted, yet you might be sure that is the safest way.

Direct. xxxiv. ‘ Judge not of so great a cause in a time of melancholy, when fears and confusions make you unfit.’ But in such a case as that, as also whenever satan would disturb your settled faith, or tempt you at his pleasure to be still new questioning resolved cases and discerned truths, abhor his suggestions, and give them no entertainment in your thoughts, but cast them back into the tempter’s face. There is not one melancholy person of a multitude, but is violently assaulted with temptations to blasphemy and unbelief, when they have but half the use of reason and no composedness of mind to debate such controversies with the devil. It is not fit for them in this incapacity to hearken to any of those suggestions, which draw them to dispute the foundations of their faith, but to cast them away with resolute abhorrence ; nor should any Christian, that is soundly settled on the true foundation, gratify the devil so much as to dispute with him whenever he provoketh us to it, but only endeavour to strengthen our faith, and destroy the remnants of unbelief.

Direct. xxxv. ‘ Remember that Christ doth propagate his religion conjunctly by his Spirit and his Word, and effecteth himself the faith which he commandeth.’ For though there be sufficient evidence of credibility in his Word, yet the blinded mind, and corrupt, perverted hearts of men, do need the cure of his medicinal grace, before they will effectually and savingly believe a doctrine which is so

holy, high, and heavenly, and doth so much control their lusts. See therefore that you distrust your corrupted hearts, and earnestly beg the Spirit of Christ.

Direct. xxxvi. ‘Labour earnestly for the love of every truth which you believe, and to feel the renewing power of it upon your hearts; and the reforming power on your lives; especially that you may be advanced to the love of God and to a heavenly mind and life.’ And this will be a most excellent help against all temptations to unbelief: for the heart holdeth the Gospel much faster than the head alone. The seed that is cast into the earth, if it quicken and take root, is best preserved; and the deeper rooted the surer it abideth; but if it die, it perisheth and is gone. When the seed of the holy Word hath produced the new creature, it is sure and safe; but when it is retained only in the brain as a dead opinion, every temptation can overturn it. It is an excellent advantage that the serious, practical Christian hath, above all hypocrites and unsanctified men: love will hold faster than dead belief. Love is the grace that abideth for ever; and that is the enduring faith which works by love. The experienced Christian hath felt so much of the power and goodness of the Word, that if you puzzle his head with subtle reasonings against it, yet his heart and experience will not suffer him to let it go. He hath tasted it so sweet that he will not believe it to be bitter, though he cannot answer all that is said against it. If another would persuade you to believe ill of your dearest friend or father, love and experience would better preserve you from his deceit than reasoning would do. The new creature, or new nature in believers, and the experience of God’s love communicated by Jesus Christ unto their souls, are constant witnesses to the Word of God: he that believeth hath the witness in himself; that is, the Holy Ghost which was given him, which is an objective testimony or an evidence, and an effective. Of this see my “Treatise of Infidelity.” Unsanctified men may be easier turned to infidelity; for they never felt the renewed, quickening work of faith; nor were ever brought by it to the love of God, and a holy and heavenly mind and life. They that never were Christians at the heart, are soonest turned from being Christians in opinion and name.

Quest. ‘ By what reason, evidence, or obligation, were the Jews bound to believe the prophet? Seeing Isaiah, Jeremy, Ezekiel, &c. wrought no miracles, and there were false prophets in their days; how then could any man know that indeed they were sent of God, when they nakedly affirmed it?’

Answ. I mention this objection or case, because in my book of the “Reasons of the Christian Religion,” (to which for all the rest I refer the reader) it is forgotten: and because it is one of the hardest questions about our faith.

1. Those that think every book of Scripture doth now prove itself to be divine ‘*propria luce*,’ by its own matter, style, and other properties, will accordingly say, that by hearing the prophets then, as well as by reading them now, this intrinsic, satisfactory evidence was discernible. All that I can say of this is, that there are such characters in the prophecies as are a help to faith, as making it the more easily credible that they are of God, but not such as I could have been ascertained by (especially as delivered by parcels then), if there had been no more.

2. Nor do I acquiesce in their answer who say that, Those that have the same spirit, know the style of the spirit in the prophets. For, 1. This would suppose none capable of believing them groundedly that had not the same spirit; 2. And the spirit of sanctification is not enough to our discerning prophetic inspirations, as reason and experience fully prove. The gift of discerning spirits¹, was not common to all the sanctified.

3. It is much to be observed that God never sent any prophet to make a law or covenant on which the salvation of the people did depend, without the attestation of unquestionable miracles. Moses wrought numerous open miracles, and such as controlled and confuted the contradicters’ seeming miracles in Egypt; and Christ and his apostles wrought more than Moses. So that these laws and covenants by which God would rule and judge the people were all confirmed beyond all just exception.

4. It must be noted, that many other prophets also wrought miracles to confirm their doctrine, and prove that they were sent of God, as did Elias and Elisha.

¹ 1 Cor. xii. 10.

5. It must be noted, that there were schools of prophets, or societies of them in those times^m, who were educated in such a way as fitted them to the reception of prophetic inspirations, when it pleased God to give them. Not that mere education made any one a prophet, nor that the prophets had at all times the present, actual gift of prophecy; but God was pleased so far to own men's commanded diligence, as to join his blessing to a meet education, and at such times as he thought meet, to illuminate such by visions and revelations above all others: and therefore it is spoken of Amos, as a thing extraordinary, that he was made a prophet of a herdsman.

6. Therefore a prophet among the Jews was known to be such, usually, before these recorded prophecies of their's, which we have now in the Holy Scriptures: 1. The spirits of the prophets which are subject to the prophets, were judged of by those prophets that had indeed the Spirit; and so the people had the testimony of the other prophets concerning them. 2. The Lord's own direction to know a true prophet byⁿ, is the coming to pass of that which he foretelleth. Now it is like that before they were received into the number of prophets, they had given satisfaction to the societies of the prophets, by the events of things before foretold by them. 3. Or they might have wrought miracles before to have satisfied the members of the college of their calling, though these miracles are not all mentioned in the Scripture. 4. Or the other prophets might have some Divine testimony concerning them by visions, revelations, or inspirations of their own. So that the people were not left to the credulity of naked, unproved assertions, of any one that would say that he was sent of God.

7. There were some signs given by some of the prophets to confirm their word. As Isaiah's predictions of Hezekiah's danger and remedy, and recovery, and of the going back of the shadow on Ahaz's dial ten degrees, &c.; and more such there might be, which we know not of.

8. All prophecies were not of equal obligation. The first prophecies of any prophet who brought no attestation by miracles, nor had yet spoken any prophecy that had been

^m 1 Sam. x. 10. xix. 20. 1 Kings xx. 35. 41. xxii. 13. 2 Kings ii. 3. 5. 7. 15. iv. 1. 38. v. 22. vi. 1. ix. 1. 1 Cor. xiv. 32. ⁿ Deut. xviii. 22.

fulfilled, might be a merciful revelation from God, which might oblige the hearers to a reverent regard, and an inquiry into the authority of the prophet, and a waiting in suspense till they saw whether it would come to pass; and the fulfilling of it increaseth their obligation. Some prophecies that foretold but temporal things (captivities or deliverances) might at first (before the prophets produced a divine attestation) be rather a bare prediction than a law; and if men believed them not, it might not make them guilty of any damning sin at all, but only they refused that warning of a temporal judgment, which might have been of use to them had they received it.

9. But our obligation now to believe the same Scripture prophecies is greater, because we live in the age when most of them are fulfilled, and the rest are attested by Christ and his apostles, who proved their attestations by manifold miracles.

10. When the prophets reprov'd the known sins of the people, and called men to such duties as the law required, no man could speed ill by obeying such a prophet, because the matter of his prophecies were found in God's own law, which must of necessity be obeyed. And this is the chief part of the recorded prophecies.

11. And any man that spake against any part of God's law (of natural or supernatural revelation) was not to be believed^o, because God cannot speak contrary to himself.

12. But the prophets themselves had another kind of obligation to believe their own visions and inspirations, than any of their hearers had; for God's great extraordinary revelation was like the light, which immediately revealed itself, and constrained the understanding to know that it was of God: and such were the revelations that came by angelical apparitions and visions. Therefore prophets themselves might be bound to more than their bare word could have bound their hearers to; as to wound themselves, to go bare, to feed on dung, &c.: and this was Abraham's case in offering Isaac. Yet God did never command a prophet, or any by a prophet, a thing simply evil; but only such things as were of a mutable nature, and which his will could alter, and make to be good: and such was the case of Abraham himself, if well considered.

• Deut. xiii. and xviii.

PART II.

Directions against Hardness of Heart.

It is necessary that some Christians be better informed what hardness of heart is, who most complain of it. The metaphor is taken from the hardness of any matter which a workman would make an impression on; and it signifieth the passive and active resistance of the heart against the Word and works of God, when it receiveth not the impressions which the Word would make, and obeyeth not God's command; but after great and powerful means remaineth as it was before, unmoved, unaffected, and disobedient. So that hardness of heart is not a distinct sin, but the habitual power of every sin, or the deadness, unmoveableness, and obstinacy of the heart in any sin. So many duties and sins as there be, so many ways may the heart be hardened against the Word, which forbiddeth those sins, and commandeth those duties. It is therefore an error, that hath had very ill consequences on many persons, to think that hardness of heart is nothing but a want of passionate feeling in the matters which concern the the soul; especially a want of sorrow and tears. This hath made them over-careful for such tears, and grief, and passions, and dangerously to make light of many greater instances of the hardness of their hearts. Many beginners in religion (who are taken up in penitential duties) do think that all repentance is nothing but a change of opinion, except they have those passionate griefs and tears, which indeed would well become the penitent; and hereupon they take more pains with themselves to affect their hearts with sorrow for sin, and to wring out tears, than they do for many greater duties. But when God calleth them to love him, and to praise him, and to be thankful for his mercies; or to love an enemy, or forgive a wrong: when he calleth them to mortify their earthly mindedness, their carnality, their pride, their passion, or their disobedience, they yield but little to his call, and shew here much greater hardness of heart, and yet little complain of this or take notice of it. I entreat you therefore to observe, that the greater the duty is, the worse it is to harden the heart against it; and the greater the sin is, the worse it is to harden the heart by ob-

stinacy in it. And that the greater duties are, the love of God and man, with a mortified and heavenly mind and life; and to resist God's Word commanding these, is the great and dangerous hardening of the heart. The life of grace lieth, 1. In the preferring of God, and heaven, and holiness, in the estimation of our minds before all worldly things. 2. In the choosing them, and resolving for them with our wills, before all others. 3. In the seeking of them in the bent and drift of our endeavours. These three make up a state of holiness. But for strength of parts, or memory, or expression, and so for passionate affections of sorrow, or joy, or the tears that express them; all these in their time, and place, and measure, are desirable, but not of necessity to salvation, or to the life of grace. They follow much the temperature of the body, and some have much of them that have little or no grace, and some want them that have much grace. The work of repentance consisteth most in loathing and falling out with ourselves for our sins, and in forsaking them with abhorrence, and turning unto God; and he that can do this without tears is truly penitent, and he that hath never so many tears, without this, is impenitent still^P. And that is the hard-hearted sinner, that will not be wrought to a love of holiness, nor let go his sin, when God commandeth him; but after all exhortations, and mercies, and perhaps afflictions, is still the same as if he had never been admonished, or took no notice what God hath been saying or doing to reclaim him. Having thus told you what hardness of heart is, you may see that I have given you Directions against it at large before Chap. III. Direct. VI. and VIII.; but shall add these few.

Direct. I. 'Remember the majesty and presence of that most holy God, with whom we have to do.' Nothing will more affect and awe the heart, and overrule it in matters of religion, than the true knowledge of God. We will not talk sleepily or contemptuously to a king; how much less should we be stupid or contemptuous before the God of Heaven? It is that God whom angels worship, that sustaineth the world, that keepeth us in life, that is always present, observing all that we think, or say, or do, whose commands are upon us, and with whom we have to do in all things;

^P Non tamen ideo beatus est, quia patienter miser est. August. de Civit. l. 14. c. 25.

and shall we be hardened against his fear? "Who hath hardened himself against Him, and hath prospered?"

Direct. II. 'Think well of the unspeakable greatness and importance of those truths and things which should affect you, and of those duties which are required of you.' Eternity of joy or torment is such an amazing thing, that one would think every thought, and every mention either of it or of any thing that concerneth it, should go to our very hearts, and deeply affect us, and should command the obedience and service of our souls. It is true, they are things unseen, and therefore less apt in that respect to affect us than things visible; but the greatness of them should recompense that disadvantage a thousand fold. If our lives lay upon every word we speak, or upon every step we go, how carefully should we speak and go! But O how deeply should things affect us, in which our everlasting life is concerned! One would think a thing of so great moment, as dying, and passing into an endless life of pain or pleasure, should so take up and transport the mind of man, that we should have much ado to bring ourselves to mind, regard, or talk of the inconsiderable interests of the flesh! How inexcusable a thing is a senseless, careless, negligent heart, when God looketh on us, and heaven or hell is a little before us? Yea, when we are so heavily laden with our sins, and compassed about with so many enemies, and in the midst of such great and manifold dangers, to be yet senseless under all, is (so far) to be dead. Will not the wounds of sin, and the threatenings of the law, and the accusations of conscience, make you feel? He that cannot feel the prick of a pin will feel the stab of a dagger, if he be alive.

Direct. III. 'Remember how near the time is, when stupidity and senseless neglect of God will be banished from all the world; and what certain and powerful means are before you at death and judgment, to awaken and pierce the hardest heart.' There are but few that are quite insensible at death; there are none past feeling after death, in heaven or hell. No man will stand before the Lord in the day of judgment, with a sleepy or senseless heart. God

^r Job ix. 4.

^s Lento enim gradu ad vindictam sui divina procedit ira, tarditatemque supplicii gravitate compensat. Valerius Max. de Dionys. lib. 1. c. 2. Bipont Ed. vol. i. p. 14.

will recover your feeling by misery, if you will lose it by sin, and not recover it by grace. He can make you now a terror to yourselves^t; he can make conscience say such things in secret to you, as you shall not be able to forget or slight. But if conscience awake you not, the approach of death it is likely will awaken you; when you see that God is now in earnest with you, and that die you must, and there is no remedy, will you not begin to think now, Whither must I go? and what will become of me for ever? Will you then harden your heart against God and his warnings? If you do, the first moment of your entrance upon eternity will cure your stupidity for ever. It will grieve a heart that is not stone, to think what a feeling stony-hearted sinners will shortly have, when God will purposely make them feel, with his wrathful streams of fire and brimstone! When satan, that now hindereth your feeling, will do his worst to make you feel; and conscience, the never-dying worm, will gnaw your hearts, and make them feel, without ease or hope of remedy. Think what a wakening day is coming!

Direct. iv. ‘Think often of the love of God in Christ, and of the bloody sufferings of thy Redeemer,’ for it hath a mighty power to melt the heart. If love, and the love of God, and so great and wonderful a love, will not soften thy hardened heart, what will?

Direct. v. ‘Labour for a full apprehension of the evil and danger of a hardened heart.’ It is the death of the soul, so far as it prevaieth: at the easiest, it is like the stupidity of a paralytic member or a seared part. Observe the names which Scripture giveth it. The “hardening of the heart^u.” The “hardening of the neck^x,” which signifieth inflexibility. The “hardening of the face^y,” which signifieth impudency. The “searedness of the conscience^z.” The “impenitency of the heart^a.” Sometimes it is called “sottishness,” or “stupidity^b.” Sometimes it is called a “not caring,” or “not laying things to heart, and not regarding^c.” Sometimes it is denominated metaphorically from inanimates, “A face harder than a rock^d.” “Stony hearts^e.” “A neck with an iron sinew, and a brow

^t Jer. xx. 4.

^y Prov. xxi. 29.

^b Jer. iv. 22.

^d Jer. v. 3.

^u Prov. xxviii. 14.

^a 1 Tim. iv. 2.

^c Isa. xlii. 25. v. 12. xxxii. 9—11.

^e Ezek. xi. 19. xxxvi. 26.

^x Prov. xxix. 10.

^z Rom. ii. 5.

of brass^f." It is called "sleep," and a "deep slumber," and a "spirit of slumbers," and "death" itself^h.

Observe also how dreadful a case it is, if it be predominant, both symptomatically and effectively. It is a forerunner of mischiefⁱ. It is a dreadful sign of one that is far more unlikely than others to be converted; when they are "alienated from the life of God by their ignorance," and are "past feeling," they are "given up to work uncleanness with greediness^k." Usually God calleth those that he will save, before they are past feeling; though such are not hopeless, their hope lieth in the recovering of the feeling which they want; and a hardened heart, and iron neck, and brazen forehead are a sadder sign of God's displeasure, than if he had made the heavens as brass, and the earth as iron to you, or let out the greatest distress upon your bodies. When men have eyes and see not, and ears and hear not, and hearts but understand not, it is a sad prognostic that they are very unlikely to be "converted and forgiven^l." A hardened heart (predominantly) is garrisoned and fortified by satan against all the means that we can use to help them: and none but the Almighty can cast him out and deliver them. Let husband, or wife, or parents, or the dearest friends entreat a hardened sinner to be converted, and he will not hear them. Let the learnedest, or wisest, or holiest man alive, both preach and beseech him, and he will not turn. At a distance he may reverence and honour a great divine, and a learned or a holy man, especially when they are dead; but let the best man on earth be the minister of the place where he liveth, and entreat him daily to repent, and he will either hate and persecute him, or neglect and disobey him. What minister was ever so learned or holy, or powerful a preacher, that had not sad experience of this? When the prophet crieth out, "Who hath believed our report^m?" and the apostles were fain to shake off the dust of their feet against many that rejected them; and were abused, and scorned, and persecuted by those whose souls they would have saved? Nay, Jesus Christ himself was refused by the most that heard him; and no minister dare compare himself with Christ. If our Lord and Master

^f Isa. xlviii. 4.^g Rom. xiii. 11. xi. 8. Matt. xxv. 5.^h 1 Tim. v. 6. Ephes. ii. 1. 5. Col. ii. 13. Jude 12.ⁱ Prov. xxviii. 14.^k Ephes. iv. 14.^l Mark iv. 12. Acts xxviii. 27.^m Isa. liii. 1.

was blasphemed, scorned, and murdered by sinners, what better should his ablest ministers expect? St. Augustine found drunkenness so common in Afric, that he motioned that a council might be called for the suppression of it; but if a general council of all the learned bishops and pastors in the world were called, they could not convert one hardened sinner, by all their authority, wit, or diligence, without the power of the Almighty God. For will they be converted by man, that are hardened against God? What can we devise to say to them that can reach their hearts, and get within them, and do them good? Shall we tell them of the law and judgments of the Lord, and of his wrath against them? why all these things they have heard so often till they sleep under it, or laugh at them. Shall we tell them of death, and judgment, and eternity? why we speak to the posts or men asleep: they hear us as if they heard us not. Shall we tell them of endless joy and torments? they feel not, and therefore fear not, nor regard not; they have heard of all these, till they are weary of hearing them, and our words seem to them but as the noise of the wind or water, which is of no signification. If miracles were wrought among them by a preacher, that healed the sick, and raised the dead, they would wonder at him, but would not be converted. For Christ did thus, and yet prevailed but with fewⁿ; and the apostles wrought miracles, and yet were rejected by the most^o. Nay, if one of their old companions should be sent from the dead to give them warning, he might affright them, but not convert them; for Christ hath told us so himself^p; or if an angel from heaven should preach to them, they would be hardened still, as Balaam and others have been. Christ rose from the dead, and yet was after that rejected. We read not of the conversion of the soldiers that watched his sepulchre, though they were affrighted with the sight of the angels: but they were after that hired for a little money to lie, and say that Christ's disciples stole him away. If magistrates that have power on their bodies, should endeavour to bring them to godliness, they would not obey them, nor be persuaded. King Hezekiah's messengers were but mocked by the people. David and Solomon could not convert their hardened subjects. Punish them, and hang them, and they will be wicked to the death:

ⁿ John xi. 48. 53.^o Acts vii. 57. xxii. 22.^p Luke xvi. 31.

witness the impenitent thief that died with Christ, and died reproaching him. Though God afflict them with rod after rod, yet still they will sin and are the same^q. Let death come near and look them in the face, and let them see that they must presently go to judgment, it will affright them, but not convert them. Let them know and confess, that sin is bad, that holiness is best, that death and eternity are at hand, yet are they the same, and all will not win their hearts to God; till grace take away their stony hearts, and give them tender, fleshy hearts^r.

Direct. vi. 'Take notice of the doleful effects of hard-heartedness in the world.' This fills the world with wickedness and confusion, with wars and bloodshed; and leaveth it under that lamentable desertion and delusion, which we behold in the far greatest part of the earth. How many kingdoms are left in the blindness of Heathenism and Mahometanism, for hardening their hearts against the Lord! How many Christian nations are given up to the most gross deceits of popery, and princes and people are enemies to reformation, because they hardened their hearts against the light of truth! What vice so odious, even beastly filthiness, and bitterest hatred, and persecution of the ways of God, which men of all degrees and ranks do not securely wallow in through the hardness of their hearts! This is the thing that grieves the godly, that wearieth good magistrates, and breaks the hearts of faithful ministers: when they have done their best, they are fain, as Christ himself before them, to grieve for the hardness of men's hearts. Alas! we live among the dead: our towns and countries are in a sadder case than Egypt, when every house had a dead man. Even in our churches, it were well if the dead were only underground, and most of our seats had not a dead man, that sitteth as if he heard, and kneeleth as if he prayed, when nothing ever pierced to the quick. We have studied the most quickening words, we have preached with tears in the most earnest manner, and yet we cannot make them feel! as if we cried like Baal's worshippers, O Baal, hear us! or, like the Irish to their dead, 'Why wouldst thou die, and leave thy house, and lands, and friends?' So we talk to them about the death of their souls, and their wilful misery, who

^q Psal. lxxviii. Hos. vii. 14. Amos iv. 9. Jer. v. 3. Isa. i. 5.

^r Ezek. xxxvi. 26.

never feel the weight of any thing we say : we are left to ring them a peal of lamentation, and weep over them as the dead that are not moved by our tears : we cast the seed into stony ground^a. It stops in the surface, and it is not in our power to open their hearts, and get within them. I confess that we are much to blame ourselves, that ever we did speak to such miserable souls, without more importunate earnestness and tears ; (and it is because the stone of the heart is much uncured in ourselves ; for which God now justly layeth so many of us by :) but yet, we must say, our importunity is such, as leaveth them without excuse. We speak to them of the greatest matters in all the world ; we speak it to them in the name of God ; we shew them his own Word for it ; and plead with them the arguments which he hath put into our mouths ; and yet we speak as to posts and stones ; to men past feeling. What a pitiful sight was it to see Christ stand weeping over Jerusalem, for the hardness of their hearts, and the nearness and greatness of their misery ! while they themselves were so far from weeping for it, that they raged against the life of him that so much pitied them ! We bless God that it is not thus with all. He hath encouraged some of us with the heart-yielding, obedient attention of many great congregations : but, among the best, alas ! how many of these hardened sinners are mixed ! and, in many places, how do they abound ! Hence it is that such odious abominations are committed ; such filthiness and lying, and perjury, and acts of malicious enmity against the servants of the Lord ; and that so many are haters of God and godliness. If satan had not first hardened their hearts, he could never have brought them to such odious crimes, as now with impudency are committed in the land. As Lot's daughters were fain to make their father drunk, that he might commit the sin of incest ; so the devil doth first deprive men both of reason and feeling, that he may bring them to such heinous wickedness as this, and make them laugh at their own destruction, and abhor those most that fain would save them. And they are not only past feeling, but so hate any quickening ministry, or truth, or means, which would recover their feeling, that they seem to go to hell, as some condemned malefactors to the gallows, that make themselves drunk before they go, as if it were all they

^a Matt. xiii. 5. 20.

had to care for, to keep themselves hoodwinked, from knowing or feeling whither they go, till they are there.

See what a picture of a hardened people God giveth to Ezēkiel: "But the house of Israel will not hearken to thee; for they will not hearken to me: for all the house of Israel are impudent and hard hearted[†]." Observe but what a case it is that they are so insensible of, and then you will see what a hardhearted sinner, past feeling, is.

1. They are the servants of sin; in the power of it; corrupted by it; and yet they feel it not.

2. They have the guilt of many thousand sins upon them, all is unpardoned that ever they committed, and yet they feel it not.

3. They have the threatenings and curses of God in force against them in his Word; even words so terrible, as you would think might affright them out of their sins or their wits: and they take on them to believe this Word of God; and yet they feel not.

4. They are in the power of the devil: ruled and deceived by him, and taken captive by him at his will[‡].

5. They may be certain that if they die in this condition they shall be damned, and they are uncertain whether they shall live another day: they are never sure to be one hour longer out of hell; and yet they feel not.

6. They know that they must die, and that it is a great change, and of the greatest, endless consequence, that death will make with them, and they know that this is sure and near, and are past doubt of it; and yet they feel it not[×].

7. They must shortly appear before the Lord, and be judged for all that they have done in the body, and be doomed to their endless state; and yet they feel not.

8. They know that life is short, and that they have but a little time to prepare for all this terrible change, and that it must go with them for ever, as they now prepare; and yet they feel not.

9. They hear and read of the case of hardened, wicked men, that have gone before them, and have resisted grace,

[†] Ezek. iii. 7.

[‡] Acts xxvi. 18. 2 Tim. ii. 26.

[×] *Feriemini, moriemini, sentietis: an cæci autem an videntes, id in vestra manu est. Optate igitur bene mori (quod ipsum nisi bene vixeritis frustra est.) Optate, inquam, nitimini, et quod in vobis est facile: reliquum illi committite; qui vos in hanc vitam ultro non vocatos intulit; egressuris, non nisi vocatus et rogatus manum dabit. Non mori autem nolite optare. Petrarch. Dial. 107. lib. 2.*

and lost their time, as they now do : and they read or hear of the miserable end that such have come to ; and yet they feel not.

10. They have a world of examples continually before them : they see the filthy lives of many for their warning, and the holy lives of others for their imitation, and see how Christ and satan strive for souls ; and yet they feel not.

11. They are always before the eye of God, and do all this before his face. He warneth them, and calleth them to repentance ; and yet they feel not.

12. They have Christ as it were crucified before their eyes^y : they hear of his sufferings : they may see in him what sin is, and what the love of God is : he pleadeth with them his blood and sufferings against their obstinate unkindness ; and yet they feel not.

13. They have everlasting joy and glory offered them, and heaven so opened to them in God's promises, that they may see it as in a glass^z. They take on them to believe, how much the blessed spirits there abhor such wickedness as theirs ; and yet they feel not.

14. They have the torments of hell opened to them in the Word of God : they read what impenitent souls must suffer to all eternity : they hear some in despair in this life, roaring in the misery of their souls : they hear the joyful thanksgivings of believers, that Christ delivereth them from those torments ; and yet they feel not.

15. All the promises of salvation in the Gospel, do put in an exception against these men, " unless they be converted : " they are made to the penitent, and not to the impenitent. There is justification and life ; but not for them. " There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, that walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit^a. " " But he that believeth not, is condemned already^b. " And they that " after their hardness and impenitent hearts, do treasure up wrath against the day of wrath, shall have tribulation and anguish^c. " Here is comfort for repenting sinners, but none (but on condition they repent) for them : when others are welcomed to Christ's marriage feast, he saith to these, " How came you in hither ? " and yet they feel not.

16. They still carry about with them the doleful eviden-

^y Gal. iii. 1.

^z 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

^a Rom. viii. 1.

^b John iii. 18. 36.

^c Rom. ii. 5-7.

ces of all this misery. One would think the ambitious, and covetous, and voluptuous might see these death-marks on themselves; and the ungodly might feel that God hath not their hearts: especially they that hate the godly, and shew their wolfish cruelty against them, and are the progeny of Cain; and yet they feel not any of this, but live as quietly, and talk as pleasantly, as if all were well with them, and their souls were safe, and their calling and election were made sure. Alas! if these souls were not hardened in sin, we should see it in their tears, or hear it in their complaints: they would after sermon sometimes come to the minister, as they, Acts ii. 37. xvi. 30. "Sirs, what must we do to be saved?" or we should see it in their lives; or hear of it by report of others, who would observe the change that grace had made: and sermons would stick longer by them, and not at best be turned off with a fruitless commendation, and saying it was a good sermon, and there is an end of it. Judge now, by this true description which I have given you, what a hardened sinner is. And then the godly may so see cause to bewail the remnants of this mischief, as yet to be daily thankful to God, that they are not in the power of it.

Direct. vii. 'Live, if you can possibly, under a lively, quickening ministry, and in the company of serious, lively Christians.' It is true, that we should be deeply affected with the truths of God, how coldly soever they be delivered. But the question is not, what is our duty; but, what are our disease, and our necessity, and the proper remedy. All men should be so holy, as not to need any exhortations to conversion at all: but shall ministers therefore neglect such exhortations, or they that need them turn away their ears? Hear, if possible, that minister that first feels what he speaks, and so speaks what he feels, as tendeth most to make you feel. "Cry aloud; spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgressions, and the house of Israel their sins^d." Though such "as seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinances of their God." God is the chief agent; but he useth to work according to the fitness of the instrument. O woeful case! to hear a dead minister speaking to a dead people, the living truths of the living God! As Christ said, "If the blind

^d Isa. lviii. 1, 2.

lead the blind, both will fall into the ditch." And if the dead must raise the dead, and the ungodly enemies of a holy life must bring men to godliness and to a holy life, it must be by such a power as once made use of clay and spittle, to open the eyes of the blind. It seems it was a proverb in Christ's days, "Let the dead bury their dead:" but not, 'Let the dead raise the dead.' God may honour the bones of the dead prophet, with the raising a corpse that is cast into its grave, and toucheth them. A meeting of a dead minister and a dead people, is like a place of graves: and though it be a lamentable thing to hear a man speak without any life, of life eternal, yet God can concur to the quickening of a soul. But sure we have no great reason to expect that ordinarily he should convert men so miraculously, without the moral aptitude of means. It is most incongruous for any man in his familiar discourse, to speak without great seriousness and reverence, of things concerning life eternal. But for a preacher to talk of God, of Christ, of heaven, and hell, as coldly and sleepily, as if he were persuading men not to believe him, or regard him, that no more regards himself, is less tolerable. It is a sad thing to hear a man draw out a dreaming, dull discourse, about such astonishing weighty things; and to speak as if it were the business of his art, to teach men to sleep while the names of heaven and hell are in their ears; and not to be moved while they hear the message of the living God, about their life or death everlasting. If a man tell in the streets of a fire in the town, or a soldier bring an alarm of the enemy at the gates, in a reading or jesting tone, the hearers will neglect him, and think that he believeth not himself. I know it is not mere noise that will convert a soul: a bawling fervency, which the hearers may discern to be but histrionical and affected, and not to come from a serious heart, doth harden the auditors worst of all. A rude, unreverent noise is unbecoming an ambassador of Christ. But an ignorant saying of a few confused words, or a sleepy recital of the most pertinent things, do as little beseech them. Christ raised not Lazarus by the loudness of his voice: but where the natural ears are the passage to the mind, the voice and manner should be suitable to the matter. Noise without seriousness and pertinent matter, is like gunpowder without bullet, that causeth sound, and no execution. And the

weightiest matter without clear explication and lively application, is like bullet without powder. If you will throw cannon bullets at the enemy with your hands, they will sooner fall on your feet than on them. And it is deadness aggravated by hypocrisy, when a lifeless preacher will pretend moderation, as if he were afraid of speaking too loud and earnestly, lest he should awake the dead, whom lightning and thunder will not awake : and when he will excuse himself by accusing those that are not as drowsy or dead as he : and would make men believe that seriousness is intemperate rage or madness. If you are cast upon a cold and sleepy minister, consider the matter more than the manner : but choose not such a one for the cure of hardness and insensibility of heart.

Direct. VIII. ‘ Take notice, how sensible, tender-hearted Christians are, of sins far less than those that you make a jest of :’ and how close those matters come to their hearts, that touch not yours. And have not you as much cause to be moved as they ? and as much need to lay such things to heart ? Did you but know what a trouble it is to them, to be haunted with temptations to the unbelief and atheism which prevaieth with you : though they are far from choosing them, or delighting in them ! Did you see how involuntary thoughts and frailties make some of them weary of themselves ! And how they even hate their hearts for believing no more, and loving God no more, and for being so strange to God and heaven, when yet there is nothing in the world so dear to them, nor hath so much of their estimation or endeavour ! You would think, sure, that if such hearts had your sin and misery to feel, they would feel it to their grief indeed, (unless the sin itself did hinder the feeling, as it doth with you.) Let tender-hearted Christians instruct you, and not be witnesses against you.

Direct. IX. ‘ Take heed of hardening company, examples, and discourse.’ To hear men rail and scoff at holiness, and curse, and swear, and blaspheme the name and truth of God, will at first make you tremble ; but if you wilfully cast yourself ordinarily into such company, by degrees your sense and tenderness will be gone, and you will find a very great hardening power, in the company, and frequent discourse, and practices, which yourselves condemn.

Direct. x. 'Take heed of wilful sinning against knowledge: much more of lying in such sin, unrepented of.' It greatly hardeneth, to sin against knowledge: and much more to commit such sins over and over. This grieveth and driveth away the Spirit, and dangerously provoketh God to leave men to themselves.

Direct. xi. 'Take heed of being customary in the use of those means that must be the means of curing hardened hearts.' If once the lively preaching, and holy living, and fervent praying, of the servants of God, be taken by thee but as matters of course, and thou go with them to church and to prayers, but as to eat, or drink, or kneel with them but for custom, thou wilt be as the smith's dog, that can sleep by the anvil, while the hammers are beating, and the sparks are flying about his ears. It is dangerous to grow customary and dull, under powerful, lively helps.

Direct. xii. 'Be often with the sick, and in the house of mourning, and read thy lesson in the church-yard, and let the grave, and bones, and dust instruct thee.' When thou seest the end of all the living, perhaps thou wilt somewhat lay it to heart. Sight will sometimes do more than the hearing of greater things. Fear may possibly touch the heart, that hath not yet so much ingenuity as to be melted by the force of love. And ordinarily, the humbling and softening of a hard, impenitent heart begins in fear, and ends in love. The work of preparation is in a manner the work of fear alone. The first work of true conversion is begun in a great measure of fear, and somewhat of love; but so little as is scarce perceived, because of the more sensible operations of fear. And as a Christian groweth, his love increaseth, till perfect love in the state of perfection have cast out all tormenting fear, though not our reverence or filial fear of God. Look, therefore, into the grave, and remember, man, that thou must die!—thou must die!—it is past all controversy that thou must die! And dost thou know where thou must appear, when death hath once performed its office? Dost thou not believe that after death comes judgment? Dost thou not know that thou art now in a life of trial, in order to endless joy or misery? and that this life is to be lived but once? and if thou miscarry now, thou art undone for ever? and that all the hope of prevent-

ing thy damnation, is now, while this life of trial doth continue? “Now is the accepted time: this is the day of salvation.” If hell be prevented, it must be now prevented! If ever thou wilt pray, if ever thou wilt be converted, if ever thou wilt be made an heir of heaven, it must be now! O man! how quickly will patience have done with thee, and time be gone! and then, O then, it will be too late! Knowest thou not, that all the care, and labour, and hope of the devil for thy damnation, is laid out this way, if it be possible to find thee other work, or take thee up with other thoughts, or keep thee asleep with presumptuous hopes, and carnal mirth, and pleasures, and company, or quiet thee by delays, till time be gone, and it be too late? And wilt thou let him have his will, and pleasure him with thy own perdition? Dost thou think these are not things to be considered on? Do they not deserve thy speediest, and most serious thoughts? At least use thy reason and self-love to the awakening, and moving, and softening thy hardened heart.

PART III.

Directions against Hypocrisy.

HYPOCRISY is the acting the part of a religious person, as upon a stage, by one that is not religious indeed^e. A seeming in religion to be what you are not, or to do what you do not. Or a dissembling or counterfeiting that piety which you have not. To counterfeit a state of godliness is the sin only of the unregenerate, who at the present are in a state of misery: to counterfeit some particular act of god-

^e Multi Christum osculantur; pauci amant: aliud est φιλεῖν, aliud καταφιλεῖν. Abr. Bucholtzer in Scultet. cur. p. 15. Dicunt Stoici sapientes esse sinceros, observateque et cavere sollicitè nequid de se melius quam sit commendare putemus fūco seu arte aliqua mala occultante, et bona quæ insunt apparere faciente, ac circumcidere vocis omnem fictionem. Laert. in Zenone. lib. vii. sect. 118. p. 489. In this citation, Mr. Baxter has given the sense, but not the words of his author. (T. C.) Philosophia res adeo difficilis est, ut tam vel simulare magna sit pars philosophiæ. Paul. Scalig. It was one of the Roman laws of the 12 Tables, ‘Impius ne audeto placere donis iram Deorum.’ ‘Let no ungodly person dare to go about to appease the displeasure of the gods by gifts:’ i. e. He must appease them first by reformation. Bona conscientia prodire vult et conspici: ipsas nequitia tenebras timet. Senec. Epist. 97. Elz. 1649. p. 379.

liness, is an odious sin, but such as a regenerate person may be tempted into. This act of hypocrisy doth not denominate the person an hypocrite; but the state of hypocrisy doth. Every hypocrite therefore is an ungodly person, seeming godly: or one that indeed is no true Christian, professing himself a Christian. Of hypocrites there be two sorts: some desire to deceive others, but not themselves, but know themselves to be but dissemblers; and these are commonly called, gross hypocrites: and some deceive both themselves and others, and think they are no hypocrites, but are as confident of their honesty and sincerity, as if they were no dissemblers at all: but yet they are as verily hypocrites as the former, because they seem to be religious and sincere, when indeed they are not, though they think they are; and profess themselves to be true Christians, when they are nothing less. These are called close hypocrites, because they know not themselves to be hypocrites; (though they might know it if they would.) This is the commonest sort of hypocrites.

There are also two degrees of hypocrites: some of them have only a general profession of Christianity and godliness, which is the professed religion of the country where they live; and these are hypocrites because they profess to be what they are not: and others make a greater and extraordinary profession of special strictness in their religion, when they are not sincere; and these are eminently called hypocrites: such as the Pharisees were among the Jews, and many friars, and Jesuits, and nuns among the Papists, who by their separating vows, and orders, and habits, profess extraordinarily an extraordinary measure of devotion, while they want the life of godliness.

In all hypocrisy there is considerable. 1. The thing pretended: 2. The pretence, or means of seeming, or the cloak of their deceit. 1. The thing pretended by common hypocrites is to be true Christians, and servants of God, and heirs of heaven, though not to be so zealous in it as some of a higher degree. The thing pretended by eminent hypocrites is to be zealous, eminent Christians, or at least to be sincere in a special manner, while they discern the common hypocrite not to be sincere. 2. The cloak of seeming or pretence by which they would be thought to be what they

are not, is any thing in general that hath an appearance of godliness, and is apt to make others think them godly. And thus there are divers sorts of hypocrites, according to the variety of their cloaks or ways of dissimulation; though hypocrisy itself be in all of them the same thing. As among the very Mahometans, and heathens, there oft arise some notable hypocrites, that by pretended revelations and austerity of life, profess themselves (as Mahomet did) to be holy persons, that had some extraordinary familiarity with God or angels. So among the Papists there are, besides the common ones, as many sorts of hypocrites as they have self-devised orders. And every where the cloak of the common hypocrite is so thin and transparent, that it sheweth his nakedness to the more intelligent sort: and this puts the eminent hypocrite upon some more laudable pretence, that is not so transparent. As for instance, the hypocrisy of common Papists, whose cloak is made up of penances and ceremonies, of saying over Latin words, or numbering words and beads for prayers, with all the rest of their trumpery before named, (Chap. iii. Gr. Direct. 15. Direct. 11.) is so thin a cloak that it will not satisfy some among themselves, but they withdraw into distinct societies and orders, (the church and the profession of Christianity being not enough for them,) that they may be religious, as if they saw that the rest are not religious. And then the common sort of ungodly Protestants have so much wit, as to see through the cloak of all the Popish hypocrisy; and therefore, they take up a fitter for themselves: and that is, the name of a Protestant Reformed religion and church, joined to the common profession of Christianity. The name and profession of a Christian and a Protestant, with going to church, and a heartless lip-service or saying their prayers, is the cloak of all ungodly Protestants. Others, discerning the thinness of this cloak, do think to make themselves a better: and they take up the strictest opinions in religion, and own those which they account the strictest party, and own that which they esteem the purest and most spiritual worship: the cloak of these men is their opinions, party, and way of worship, while their carnal lives detect their hypocrisy. Some that see through all these pretences, do take up the most excellent cloak of all, and that is, an appearance of serious spi-

rituality in religion, with a due observation of all the outward parts and means, and a reformation of life, in works of piety, justice, and charity; I say, an appearance of all these, which if they had indeed, they were sincere, and should be saved: in which the godly Christian goeth beyond them all.

By this it is plain, that, among us in England, all men that are not saints are hypocrites, because that all (except here or there a Jew or infidel) profess themselves to be Christians; and every true Christian is a saint. They know that none but saints or godly persons shall be saved: and there are few of them that will renounce their hopes of heaven; and therefore they must pretend to be all godly. And is it not most cursed, horrid hypocrisy, for a man to pretend to religion as the only way to his salvation, and confidently call himself a Christian, while he hateth and derideth the power and practice of that very religion which he doth profess? Of this, see my Treatise of "Vain Religion of the Formal Hypocrite."

The hypocrite's ends, in his pretences and dissemblings, are not all the same. One intendeth the pleasing of parents, or some friends on whom he doth depend, that will else be displeased with him, and think ill of him. Another intendeth the pleasing of the higher powers, when it falls out that they are friends to godliness. Another intends the preserving of his esteem with religious persons, that they may not judge him wicked and profane. Another intendeth the hiding of some particular villany, or the success of some ambitious enterprise. But the most common end is, to quiet and comfort their guilty souls, with an image of that holiness which they are without, and to steal some peace to their consciences by a lie: and so, because they will not be religious indeed, they will take up some shew or image of religion, to make themselves, as well as others, believe that they are religious^f.

Direct. 1. ' To escape hypocrisy, understand well wherein the life and power of godliness doth consist, and wherein

^f When Petrarch, in vita sua, speaketh of others extolling his eloquence, he addeth his own neglect of it; Ego modo bene vixissem, qualiter dixissem parvi facerem. Ventosa gloria est, de solo verborum splendore famam querere. Conscientiam potius quam famam attende. Falli saepe poterit fama: conscientia nunquam. Senec.

it differeth from the lifeless image or corpse of godliness.' The life of godliness is expressed in the Seventeen Grand Directions in Chap. iii. It principally consisteth in such a faith in Christ, as causeth us to love God above all, and obey him before all, and prefer his favour and the hopes of heaven before all the pleasures, or profits, or honours of the world; and to worship him in spirit and truth, according to the direction of his Word. The images of religion I shewed you before, page 528. Take heed of such a lifeless image:

Direct. 11. 'See that your chief study be about the heart, that there God's image may be planted, and his interest advanced, and the interest of the world and flesh subdued, and the love of every sin cast out, and the love of holiness succeed: and that you content not yourselves with seeming to do good in outward acts, when you are bad yourselves, and strangers to the great internal duties.' The first and great work of a Christian is about his heart. There it is that God dwelleth by his Spirit, in his saints; and there it is that sin and satan reign, in the ungodly. The great duties and the great sins are those of the heart. There is the root of good and evil: the tongue and life are but the fruits and expressions of that which dwelleth within^a. The inward habit of sin is a second nature: and a sinful nature is worse than a sinful act. "Keep your hearts with all diligence: for from thence are the issues of life^b." Make the tree good, and the fruit will be good: but the "viperous generation that are evil, cannot speak good: for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh^c." Till the Spirit have regenerated the soul, all outward religion will be but a dead and pitiful thing: though there is something which God hath appointed an unregenerate man to do, in order to his own conversion, yet no such antecedent act will prove that the person is justified or reconciled to God, till he be converted. To make up a religion of doing or saying something that is good, while the heart is void of the Spirit of Christ, and sanctifying grace, is the hypocrite's religion.

^a Sic certe vivendum est, tanquam in conspectu vivamus: Sic cogitandum, tanquam aliquis inpectus intimum inspicere possit: et potest. Senec. Ep. 83. Elz. p. 263. Rem dicam, ex qua mores aestimes nostros, vix quemquam invenies, qui possit aperto ostio vivere. Janitores conscientia nostra, non superbia opposuit. Sic vivimus, ut deprehendi sit, subito adspici. Senec. Ep. 43. Elz. p. 109.

^b Prov. iv. 23.

^c Matt. xii. 33, 34.

Direct. III. ‘ Make conscience of the sins of the thoughts and the desire, and other affections or passions of the mind, as well as of the sins of tongue or hand.’ A lustful thought, a malicious thought, a proud, ambitious, or covetous thought, especially if it proceed to a wish, or contrivance, or consent, is a sin the more dangerous by how much the more inward and near the heart; as Christ hath shewed you, Matt. v. and vi. The hypocrite who most respecteth the eye of man, doth live as if his thoughts were free.

Direct. IV. ‘ Make conscience of secret sins, which are committed out of the sight of men, and may be concealed from them, as well as of open and notorious sins.’ If he can do it in the dark and secure his reputation, the hypocrite is bold: but a sincere believer doth bear a reverence to his conscience, and much more to the all-seeing God.

Direct. v. ‘ Be faithful in secret duties, which have no witness but God and conscience:’ as meditation and self-examination, and secret prayer; and be not only religious in the sight of men.

Direct. VI. ‘ In all public worship be more laborious with the heart, than with the tongue or knee: and see that your tongue overrun not your heart, and leave it not behind.’ Neglect not the due composure of your words, and due behaviour of your bodies: but take much more pains for the exercise of holy desires from a believing, loving, fervent soul.

Direct. VII. ‘ Place not more in the externals, or modes, or circumstances, or ceremonies of worship, than is due; and lay not out more zeal for indifferent or little things, than cometh to their share; but let the great substantials of religion have the precedency, and be far preferred before them^k.’ Let the love of God and man be the sum of your obedience: and be sure you learn well what that meaneth; “ I will have mercy, and not sacrifice.” And remember,

^k It is a pitiful cure of the Indians’ idolatry, which the honest Jesuit Acosta (as the rest) prescribeth, lib. v. c. 11. p. 483. “ But you must especially take care, that saving rites be introduced instead of hurtful ones, and ceremonies be obliterated by ceremonies. Let the priests persuade the novices, that holy water, images, rosaries, grains, and torches, and the rest, which the church alloweth and useth, are very fit for them; and let them extol them with many praises in their popular sermons, that instead of the old superstition they may be used to new and religious signs.” This is to quench the fire with oil.

that the great thing which God requireth of you, is “to do justice, and love mercy, and walk humbly with your God.—Destroy not him with your meat for whom Christ died.” Call not for fire from heaven upon dissenters; and think not every man intolerable in the church, that is not, in every little matter, of your mind. Remember that the hypocrisy of the Pharisees is described by Christ, as consisting in a zeal for their own traditions, and the inventions of men, and the smallest matters of the ceremonial law, with a neglect of the greatest moral duties, and a furious cruelty against the spiritual worshippers of God. “Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread.—Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honour me with their lips, but their heart is far from me: but in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men¹.” “They bind heavy burdens, which they touch not themselves. All their works they do to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments; and love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in public, and to be called Rabbi.—But they shut up the kingdom of heaven against men^m,” and were the greatest enemies of the entertainment of the Gospel by the people. They “tithed mint, and anise, and cummin, and omitted the great matters of the law, judgment, and mercy, and faith.” They “strained at a gnat and swallowed a camel.” They had a great veneration for the “dead prophets and saints,” and yet were persecutors and murderers of their “successors” that were “livingⁿ.” By this description you may see which way hypocrisy doth most ordinarily work: even to a blind and bloody zeal for opinions, and traditions, and ceremonies, and other little things, to the treading down the interest of Christ and his Gospel, and a neglect of the life and power of godliness, and a cruel persecuting those servants of Christ, whom they are bound to love above their ceremonies. I marvel that many Papists tremble not when they read the character of the Pharisees! But that hypocrisy is a hidden sin, and is an enemy to the light which would discover it.

¹ Matt. xv. 2. 7—10.^m Matt. xxiii. 4—6. 13, 14.ⁿ Ver. 23, &c.

Direct. viii. 'Make conscience of the duties of obedience to superiors, and of justice and mercy towards men, as well as of acts of piety to God.' Say not a long mass in order to devour a widow's house, or a Christian's life or reputation. Be equally exact in justice and mercy as you are in prayers: and labour as much to exceed common men in the one as in the other. Set yourselves to do all the good you can to all, and do hurt to none: and do to all men as you would they should do to you.

Direct. ix. 'Be much more busy about yourselves than about others: and more censorious of yourselves than of other men: and more strict in the reforming of yourselves than of any others.' For this is the character of the sincere: when the hypocrite is little at home and much abroad; and is a sharp reprehender of others, and perniciously tender and indulgent to himself. Mark his discourse in all companies, and you shall hear how liberal he is in his censures and bitter reproach of others: how such men, and such men (that differ from him, or have opposed him, or that he hates,) are thus and thus faulty, and bad, and hateful. Yea, he is as great an accuser of his adversaries for hypocrisy, as if he were not an hypocrite himself: because he can accuse them of a heart-sin without any visible control. If he called them drunkards, or swearers, or persecutors, or oppressors, all that know them could know that he believeth them; but when he speaks about matters in the dark, he thinks the reputation of his lies have more advantage: many a word you hear from him, how bad his adversaries are; but if such hypocritical talk did not tell you, he would not tell you how bad he is himself^o.

Direct. x. 'Be impartial, and set yourselves before your consciences in the case of others.' Think with yourselves: 'How should I judge of this, in such and such a man, that I use to blame? What should I say of him, if my adversary did as I do? And is it not as bad in me as in him? Is not the sin most dangerous to me that is nearest me? And should I be more vigilant over any man's faults than my own? My damnation will not be caused by his sin; but

^o It is one of Thales' sayings in Laert. Q. Quomodo optime ac justissime vivemus? Resp. Si, quæ in aliis reprehendimus ipsi non faciamus. To judge of ourselves as we judge of others, is the way of the sincere. Lib. i. sect. 36. p. 92.

by my own it may. Instead of seeing the gnat in his eye, I have more cause to cast out a gnat from my own than a camel from his.'

Direct. xi. 'Study first to be whatever (judiciously) you desire to seem.' Desire a thousand times more to be godly, than to seem so; and to be liberal, than to be thought so; and to be blameless from every secret or presumptuous sin, than to be esteemed such. And when you feel a desire to be accounted good, let it make you think how much more necessary and desirable it is to be good indeed. To be godly, is to be an heir of heaven: your salvation followeth it. But to be esteemed godly is of little profit to you.

Direct. xii. 'Overvalue not man, and set no more by the approbation or applause of his thoughts or speeches of you than they are worth.' Hypocrisy much consisteth in overvaluing man, and making too great a matter of his thoughts and words. The hypocrite's religion is divine in name, but human in deed: it is man that he serveth and observeth most: and the shame of the world is the evil which he most studiously avoideth: and the high esteem and commendation of the world is his reward. O think, what a silly worm is man! And of how little moment are his thoughts or speeches of you, in comparison of the love of God! His thoughts of you make you not the better or the worse: and if they either lift you up or trouble you, it is your proud and foolish fantasy that doth it when you might choose. If you have not lost the key and government of your hearts, shut you the door, and keep all thence, and let men's reproaches go no further than your ears; and then what the worse will you be for all the lies and slanders of the world? And, besides the pleasing of an effeminate mind, what the better are you for their applause?

Direct. xiii. 'Look upon all men that you converse with, as ready to die and turn to dust, and passing into that

^p Cato, homo virtuti simillimus qui nunquam recte fecit, ut facere videretur, sed quia aliter facere non poterat; cuique id solum visum est rationem habere, quod haberet justitiam. Velleius Patercul. lib. 2. c. 35. Burman. Lug. Bat. p. 278.

^q Jam in ecclesiis ista quæeruntur, et omissa Apostolicorum simplicitate et puritate verborum, quasi ad Atheuæum et ad auditoria convenitur ut plausus circumstantium suscitentur, ut oratio rhetoricæ artis fucata mendacio quasi quædam meretricula procedat in publicum, non tam eruditura populos, quam favorem populi quæsitura. Hieron. in præf. l. 3. in Galat.

world where you will be little concerned in their censure or esteem of you.' If you do any thing before an infant, you little care for his presence or observation of you : much less if it be before the dead. If you knew that a man were to die to-morrow, though he were a prince, you would not be much solicitous to avoid his censure or procure his applause ; because his thoughts all perish with him ; and it is a small matter what he thinks of you for a day. Seeing therefore that all men are hasting to their dust, and you are certain that all that applaud or censure you, will be quickly gone, how little should you regard their judgment ! Look that man in the face whose applause you desire, or whose censure you fear, and remember that he is a breathing clod of clay ; and how many such are now in the grave, whose thoughts you once as much esteemed ! and this will make you more indifferent in the case.

Direct. xiv. ' At least remember, that you are passing out of the world yourselves, and look every moment when you are called away, and certainly know that you shall be here but a little while.' And is it any great matter what strangers think of you as you are passing by ? You can be contented that your name, and worth, and virtues be concealed in your inn, where you stay but a night, and that they be unknown to travellers that meet you on the road. The foolish expectation of more time on earth than God hath given you warrant to expect, is the cause that we over-value the judgment of man, as well as other earthly things, and is a great maintainer of every sensual vice.

Direct. xv. ' Set yourselves to the mortifying of self-love and pride : for hypocrisy is but the exercise of these.' Hypocrisy is dead so far as pride is dead ; and so far as self-denial and humility prevail. Hypocrisy is a proud desire to appear better than you are. Be thoroughly humbled and vile in your own eyes, and hypocrisy is done.

Direct. xvi. ' Be most suspicious of your hearts in cases where self-interest or passions are engaged : ' for they will easily deal deceitfully and cheat yourselves, in the smoke and dust of such distempers. Interest and passion so blind the mind, that you may verily think you are defending the truth, and serving God in sincerity and zeal, when all the while you are but defending some error of your own, and

serving yourselves, and fighting against God. The Pharisees thought they took part with God's law and truth against Christ. The pope, and his cardinal, and prelates think '(as in charity I must think) that it is for Christ, and unity, and truth, that they endeavour to subject the world to their own power. And what is it but interest that blindeth them into such hypocrisy? So, passionate disputers do ordinarily deceive themselves, and think verily that they are zealous for the faith, when they are but contending for their honour or conceits. Passion covers much deceit from the passionate.

Direct. xvii. 'Suspect yourselves most among the great, the wise, the learned, and the godly, or any whose favour, opinion, or applause you most esteem.' It is easy for an arrant hypocrite to despise the favour or opinion of the vulgar, of the ignorant, of the profane, or any whose judgment he contemneth. It is no great honour or dishonour to be praised or dispraised by a child, or fool, or a person that for his ignorance or profaneness is become contemptible. But hypocrisy and pride do work most to procure the esteem of those, whose judgment or parts you most admire. One most admireth worldly greatness; and such an one will play the hypocrite most, to flatter or please the great ones he admireth. Another that is wiser, more admireth the judgment of the wise and learned; and he will play the hypocrite to procure the good esteem of such, though he can slight a thousand of the ignorant; (and his pride itself will make him slight them.) Another that is yet wiser, is convinced of the excellency of godly men, above all the great and learned of the world: and this man is more in danger of pride and hypocrisy in seeking the good opinion of the godly; and therefore can despise the greatest multitude of the ignorant and profane. Yea, pride itself will make him take it as an addition to his glory, to be vilified and opposed by such miscreants as these.

Direct. xviii. 'Remember the perfections of that God whom you worship, that he is a Spirit, and therefore to be worshipped in spirit and in truth; and that he is most great and terrible, and therefore to be worshipped with seriousness and reverence, and not to be dallied with, or served with toys or lifeless lip-service; and that he is most holy,

pure, and jealous, and therefore to be purely worshipped; and that he is still present with you, and all things are naked and open to him with whom we have to do? The knowledge of God, and the remembrance of his all-seeing presence, are the most powerful means against hypocrisy. Christ himself argueth from the nature of God, who is a Spirit, against the hypocritical ceremoniousness of the Samaritans and Jews'. Hypocrites offer that to God; which they know a man of ordinary wisdom would scorn if they offered it to him. If a man knew their hearts as God doth, would he be pleased with words, and compliments, and gestures, which are not accompanied with any suitable seriousness of the mind? Would he be pleased with affected, histrionical actions? One that seeth a Papist priest come out in his formalities, and there lead the people, in a language which they understand not, to worship God by a number of ceremonies, and chanting, repeated, customary words, would think he saw a stage-player acting his part, and not a wise and holy people, seriously worshipping the most holy God. And not only in worship, but in private duties, and in converse with men, and in all your lives, the remembrance of God's presence is a powerful rebuke for all hypocrisy. It is more foolish to sin in the sight of God, because you can hide it from the world, than to steal or commit adultery in the open market-place, before the crowd, and be careful that dogs and crows discern it not. If all the world see you, it is not so much as if God in secret see you. "Be not deceived, God is not mocked".

Direct. xix. 'Remember how hypocrisy is hated of God; and what punishment is appointed for hypocrites.' They are joined in torment with unbelievers. And, as wicked men's punishment is aggravated by their being condemned to the fire prepared for the devil and his angels; so the punishment of ordinary ungodly persons, is aggravated by this, that their portion shall be with hypocrites and unbelievers. How oft find you the Lamb of God himself, denouncing his thundering woes against the hypocritical Scribes and Pharisees! How oft doth he inculcate to his disciples, "Be not as the hypocrites'." And no wonder if hypocrites be hateful to God, when they and their services

^r John iv. 23, 24.

^s Gal. vi. 7.

^t Matt. vi. 2, 5, 16.

are lifeless images, and have nothing but the name and outside of Christianity, and some antique dress to set them off, and human ornaments of wit and parts : as a corpse is more dressed with flowers than the living, as needing those ceremonies for want of life to keep it sweet. And a carrion is not amiable to God. And the hypocrite puts a scorn on God ; as if he thought that God were like the heathen's idols, that have eyes and see not, and could not discern the secret dissemblings of his heart ! or as if he were like fools and children, that are pleased with fair words and little toys. God must needs hate such abuse as this.

Direct. xx. ' Come into the light, that your hearts and lives may be thoroughly known to you. Love the most searching, faithful ministry and books : and be thankful to reprovers and plain dealing friends.' Darkness is it that cherisheth deceit. It is the office of the light to manifest. Justly do those wretches perish in their hypocrisy, who will not endure the light which would undeceive them ; but fly from a plain and powerful ministry, and hate plain reproof, and set themselves by excuses, and cavils, to defend their own deceit^u.

Direct. xxi. ' Be very diligent in the examining of your hearts and all your actions by the Word of God, and call yourselves often to a strict account.' Deceit and guilt will not endure strict examination. The Word of God is quick and powerful, discovering the thoughts and imaginations of the heart. There is no hypocrite but might be delivered from his own deceits, if by the assistance of an able guide, he would faithfully go on in the work of self-trying, without partiality or sloth.

Direct. xxii. ' Live continually as one that is going to

^u Permanent tepidi, ignavi, negligentes, vani, leves, voluptuosi, delicati ; comoda corporis superflua sectantur, suum compendium in omnibus querunt, ubicunque honorem et existimationem nominis sui integra servare possunt : intus propriæ voluntati pertinaciter addicti, irresignati, minime abnegati, superbi, curiosi, et contumaces sunt in omnibus, licet externe coram omnibus bene morati videantur. In tentationibus impatientes, amari, procaces, iracundi, tristes, aliis molesti, verbis tamen ingenioque scioli, . . In prosperis nimium elati et hilares : in adversis, nimium turbati sunt et pusillanimes : aliorum temerarii sunt iudices : aliorum vitia accuratissime perscrutari, de aliorum defectibus frequenter garrere, ac gloriari egregium putant. Ex istis et similibus operibus facillime cognosci poterunt : nam moribus gestibusque suis ceu sores quispiam suapte semet indicio produnt. Thauler. flor. p. 65, 66.

be judged at the bar of God, where all hypocrisy will be opened and shamed, and hypocrisy condemned by the all-knowing God.' One thought of our appearing before the Lord, and of the day of his impartial judgment, one would think should make man walk in the light, and teach them to understand, that the sun is not eclipsed as oft as they wink, nor is it night because they draw the curtains. What a shame will it be to have all your dissimulation laid open before all the world? "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisee, which is hypocrisy: for there is nothing covered, which shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known. Therefore whatever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets, shall be proclaimed on the house-tops."

Direct. xxiii. 'Think not that you avoid hypocrisy by changing the expressions of it; but see that you run not into a more subtle kind, while you avoid a grosser.' There is no outward way of worshipping God, nor any opinion in religion so sound, but an hypocrite can make a cloak of it. You see an ignorant, ridiculous hypocrite, such as Bishop Hall describeth in his character, that can pray up to a pillar, when his heart knoweth not what his tongue is doing, that babbleth over a few words to God while he is dressing or washing him, and talking between to the standers-by; who offereth to God the sacrifice of a fool, and knoweth not that he doth evil; that serveth God with toys and antique gestures, and saying over certain words which were never acquainted with the feeling of the heart, nor scarce with his understanding. And to avoid his hypocrisy, perhaps, you can merrily deride him, and make a formal Popish hypocrite the subject of your jests; and you can yourselves, with good understanding, pour out yourselves many hours together in orderly and meet expressions of prayer: but remember that many an hypocrite maketh himself a cloak of as good stuff as this; and that as pride hath more advantage to work upon your greater knowledge and better parts, so hypocrisy is but the offspring of pride. All this, without a heart entirely devoted unto God, is but a carcase better dressed; as the rich have more curious monuments than the poor. There is no outside thing, in which an hypocrite may not seem excellent.

Direct. xxiv. 'Be true to conscience, and hearken dili-

gently to all it saith, and be often treating with it, and daily conversant and well acquainted with it^x.’ Hypocrites bear little reverence to their conscience : they make so often and so grossly bold with them, that conscience is deposed from its office at the present, and silenced by them, lest it should gall them by preaching to them those hard sayings which they cannot bear : and perhaps at last it is seared or bribed to take part with sin. But usually an hypocrite hath a secret judge within him which condemneth him. Take heed how you use your consciences, as you love your peace and happiness. Next Christ, it must be your best friend, or your greatest enemy : palliate it how you will at present, if you wound it, it will smart at last. And it is easier to bear poverty, or shame, or torment, than to bear its wounds. 1. Mark the very principles and former judgment of your consciences ; and if they are changed, know what changed them. 2. Harken to all the secret counsel and reproofs of conscience, especially when it speaketh oft and terribly ; turn it not off without a hearing : yea, know the reason of its very scruples and doubts. 3. When it is sick and disquieted, know what the matter is, and vomit up the matter that justly disquiets it, whatever it cost you ; and be sure you go to the bottom, and do not leave the root behind. 4. Open your consciences to some able, trusty guide when it is necessary, though it cost you shame. An over-tender avoiding of such shame is the hypocrite’s sin and folly. Counsel is safe in matters of such importance. 5. Prefer conscience before all men how great soever : none is above it but God. It is God’s messenger, when it is conscience indeed : remember what it saith to you, and from whom, and for what end. Let friends, and neighbours, and company, and business, and profit, and sports, and honour stand by, and all give place whilst conscience speaketh ; for it will be a better friend to you than any of these, if you use it as a friend. It would have been better to Judas than his thirty pieces were. 6. Yet see that it be well informed, and see its commission, for it is not above God ; nor is it masterless

^x Quid autem prodest recondere se, et oculos hominum auresque vitare? Bona conscientia turbam advocat, mala etiam in solitudine anxia et sollicita est. Si honesta sunt, quæ facis, omnes sciant : si turpia, quid refert neminem scire, cum tu scias? O te miserum, si contemnis hunc testem. Senec. Ep. 43. Elz. p. 109. Matt. xxiii. 13—15. 23. 25. 27. 29.

or lawless. 7. Converse not with it only in a crowd, but in secret. 8. Keep it awake; and keep it among awakening means and company: it will much sooner fall asleep in an ale-house, or a play-house, or among the foolish and profane, than at a lively sermon, or prayer, or reverent discourse of God. If I could but get conscience awakened to perform its office, and preach over all this that I have said, in secret it would ferret the hypocrite out of his self-deceit. Go, conscience, and search that deceitful heart, and speak to it in the name of God: ask that hypocrite whether conversion ever made him a new creature; and whether his soul and all that he hath be entirely devoted unto God? and whether his hopes and treasure be laid up in heaven, and his heart be there? and whether he subject all his worldly interest to the will of God, and the interest of his soul? and whether his greatest work be about his heart, and to approve himself to God? and whether he make an impartial, diligent inquiry after the truth, with a desire to receive it at the dearest rates? Tell him that a proud self-flattery may now make him justify or extenuate his sins, and take his formalities, and lip-service, and abuse of God for true devotion, and hate every man that would detect his hypocrisy, and convert him by bringing in the light; but a light will shortly appear to his soul, which he shall not resist. And then let him stand to his justification if he can; and let him then make it good that he gave up himself in sincerity, simplicity, and self-denial, to his God.

Direct. xxv. 'Remember that hypocrisy lieth much in doubling, and in a divided heart and life: see therefore that you serve God in singleness of heart, or simplicity and integrity, as being his alone. Think not of serving God and mammon: a deep reserve at the heart for the world, while they seem to give up themselves in covenant to God, is the grand character of an hypocrite. Live as those that have one Lord and Master, that all power stoopeth to, and one end or scope to which all other are but means, and one work of absolute necessity to do; and one kingdom to seek first, and with greatest care and diligence to make sure of, and that have your hearts and faces still one way, and that agree with yourselves in what you think, and say, and do. A double heart, and a double tongue is the fashion of the hypocrite.

He hath a heart for the world, and pride, and lust, which must seem sometimes to be lifted up to ask forgiveness, that he may sin with quietness and hope of salvation: you would not think when you see him drop his beads, or lift up his hands and eyes, and seem devoutly to say his prayers, how lately he came from a tavern, or a whore, or a lie, or from scorning at serious godliness. As Bishop Hall saith, he seemeth to serve that God at church on holy-days, whom he neglecteth at home; and boweth at the name of Jesus, and sweareth profanely by the name of God. Remember that there it but one God, one heaven for us, one happiness, and one way; and this one is of such moment, as calls for all the intention and attention of our souls, and is enough to satisfy us, and should be enough to call us off from all that would divert us. A divided heart is a false and self-deceiving heart. Are there two Gods? or is Christ divided? While you grasp at both (God and the world) you will certainly lose one, and it is like you will lose both. To have two Gods, two rules, two heavens, is to have no God, no true rule, no heaven, or happiness at all. Halt not therefore between two opinions: if God be God, obey him and love him; if heaven be heaven, be sure it be first sought. But if thy belly be thy god, and the world be thy heaven, then serve and seek them, and make thy best of them.

Direct. xxvi. 'Take heed of all that fleshly policy or craft, and worldly wisdom, which are contrary to the wisdom of the Word of God, and would draw thee from the plain and open-heartedness which godly sincerity requireth. Let that which was Paul's rejoicing be your's, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not in fleshly wisdom, you have had your conversation in the world. Christianity renounceth not wisdom and honest self-preservation; but yet it maketh men plain-hearted, and haters of crafty, fraudulent minds. What is the famous hypocritical religion superadded to Christianity and called Popery, but that which Paul feared in his godly jealousy for the Corinthians, "lest as the serpent beguiled Eve by his subtilty, so their minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." A forsaking the Christian simplicity of Doctrine, Discipline, Worship, and Conversation, is the hypocrisy of religion, and of life. Equivocating and dishonest shifts and hiding, besem

those that have an ill cause, or an ill conscience, or an ill master whom they dare not trust; and not those that have so good a cause and God as Christians have.

Direct. XXVII. ‘Remember how much of sincerity consisteth in seriousness, and how much of hypocrisy consisteth in seeming, and dreaming, and trifling in the things of God and our salvation: see therefore that you keep your souls awake, in a sensible and serious frame.’ Read over the fifty considerations, which in the third part of my “Saints’ Rest,” I have given to convince you of the necessity of being serious. See that there be as much in your faith as in your creed, and as much in your hearts and lives as in your belief. Remember that seeming and dreaming will not mortify deep-rooted sins, nor conquer strong and subtle enemies, nor make you acceptable to God, nor save your souls from his revenging justice. Remember what a mad kind of profaneness it is to jest and trifle about heaven and hell, and to dally with the great and dreadful God. “Seeing all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in all holy conversation and godliness?” You pray for an obedience answering the pattern of the heavenly society when you say, ‘Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven;’ and will you be such hypocrites as to pray, that you may imitate saints and angels in the purity and obedience of your hearts and lives, and when you have done, take up with shews, and seemings, and saying a few words, and a lifeless image of that holiness which you never had; yea, and perhaps deride and persecute in others the very thing which you daily pray for. O horrible abuse of the all-seeing God! Do you no more believe or fear his justice? When the apostle saith, “Be not deceived, God is not mocked;” he intimateth, that hypocrites go about to put a scorn on God by a mock religion, though it is not he, but themselves that will prove mocked

✓ The causes of superstition (and so of hypocrisy) are, pleasing and sensual rites and ceremonies, excess of outward and Pharisaical holiness, too great reverence of traditions, which must needs load the church, the stratagems of prelates for their own ambition and lucre, the over favouring of good intentions, which opens the door to novelties and superstitions. Lord Bacon. Essay on Superstition. As P. Callimachus Exper. describeth Attila, that he was a devourer of flesh and wine, &c. and yet Religione persuasionibusque de diis à gente sua susceptis, usque ad superstitionem addictus. Calli. p. 339.

in the end. They offer God a deaf nut, or an empty shell, or cask, for a sacrifice. An hypocrite differeth from a true Christian, as a fencer from a soldier; he playeth his part very formally upon a stage with much applause; but you may perceive that he is not in good sadness, by his trifling and formality, and never killing any of his sins. Would men shew no more of the great, everlasting matters of their own professed belief, in any seriousness of affection or endeavour than most men do, if they were not hypocrites? Would they hate and scorn men for doing but that (and part of that) which they pray and profess to do themselves, if they were not hypocrites? Woe to the world, because of hypocrisy! Woe to idle shepherds, and the seeming, nominal, lifeless Christians, of what sect soever; for God will not be mocked. They are Christians; but it is with mock Christianity, while their souls are strange to the true esteem and use of Christ. They are believers, but with a mock belief, described in James ii. They believe that God should be loved above all, but they love him not. They believe that holiness is better than all the pleasures of sin; yet they choose it not, but hate it. They are religious, with a seeming, vain religion, which will not so much as humble them, nor bridle their tongues. They are wise, with a mock wisdom; they are wise enough to prove their sins to be all lawful, or but venial sins; and wise enough to cast away the medicine that would heal them; and to confute the physician, and to answer the most learned preacher of them all, and to escape salvation, and to secure themselves a place in hell, and keep themselves ignorant of it till they are there. They are converted, but with a mock conversion; which leaveth them as carnal, and proud, and worldly as before: being born of water but not of the Spirit, and being sensual still. They repent, with a mock repentance; they repent, but they will not leave their sin, nor confess and bewail it, but hate reproof, and excuse their sin. They are honest, but with a mock honesty; though they swear, and curse, and rail, and slander, and backbite, and scorn at piety itself; yet they mean well, and have honest hearts: though they receive not the Word with deep-rooting in their hearts, but are abominable and disobedient, and to every good work

reprobate, they are honest for all that^x. They love God above all, though they love not to think or speak of him seriously, but hate his holiness and justice, his Word, and holy ways and servants, and are such as the Scripture calleth "haters of God;" and keep not his commandments, nor live to his glory. They love the servants of God, but they care not if the world were rid of them all, and take them to be but a company of self-conceited, troublesome fellows, and as very hypocrites as themselves: and the poor Christians, that are cruelly used by them, think they are neither in good sadness nor in jest, when they profess to love the worshippers of God. They love not their money, nor lands, nor lusts, with such a kind of love, I am sure. They have also always good desires; but they are such mock desires as those in James ii. 15. that wished the poor were fed, and clothed, and warmed, but gave them nothing towards it: and such good desires as the sluggard hath that lieth in bed and wisheth that all his work were done. "The desires of the sluggard killeth him, because his hands refuse to labour^y." They pray, but with mock prayers; you would little think that they are speaking to the most holy God, for no less than the saving of their souls, when they are more serious in their very games and sports. They pray for grace, but they cannot abide it; they pray for holiness, but they are resolved they will have none of it; they pray against their sin, but no entreaty can persuade them from it. They would have a mock ministry, a mock discipline, a mock church, a mock sacrament, as they make a mock profession, and give God but a mock obedience, as I might shew you through all the particulars, but for being tedious. And all is, because they have but a mock faith: they believe not that God is in good earnest with them in his commands, and threatenings, and foretellings of his judgments, as Lot to his sons-in-law. "He seemeth to them as one that mocked^z," and therefore they serve him as those that would mock him. O wretched hypocrites! is this agreeable to your holy profession? You call yourselves Christians, and profess to believe the doctrine of Christ: is this agreeable to Christianity, to your creed, to the ten commandments, to the Lord's prayer, and to the rest of the Word of God? Had you none but the holy, jealous God to make a

^x Luke viii. 15. Tit. i. 16.^y Prov. xxi. 25.^z Gen. xix. 14.

mock of? Had you nothing less than religion, and matters of salvation and damnation to play with? do you serve God as if he were a child, or an idol, or a man of straw, that either knoweth not your hearts, or is pleased with toys and compliments, and shews, and saying over certain words, or acting a part before him on a stage^a? Do you know what you offer, and to whom? His power is omnipotency; his glory is ten thousand-fold above that of the sun; his wisdom is infinite; millions of angels adore him continually; he is thy King and Judge; he abhorreth hypocrites. If thou didst but see one glimpse of his glory, or the meanest of his angels, the sight would awaken thee from thy dreaming, and dallying, and frighten thee from thy canting and trifling into a serious regard of God and thy everlasting state. “Offer this now to thy governor: will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person, saith the Lord of Hosts^b?” If your servants set before you upon your table, the feathers instead of the fowl, and the hair and wool instead of the flesh, and the scales instead of the fish, would you not think they rather mocked than served you? How dear have some paid even in this life for mocking God? Let the case of Aaron’s sons^c, and of Ananias and Sapphira^d, inform you: if with the fig-tree^e, you offer God leaves only instead of fruit, you are nigh unto cursing, and your end is to be burnt. Do you not read what he saith to the church of Laodicea: “I would thou wert cold or hot; because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth^f:” that is, either be an open infidel, or a holy, downright, zealous Christian: but because thou callest thyself a Christian, and hast not the life or zeal of a Christian, but coverest thy wickedness and carnality with that holy name, I will cast thee away as an abominable vomit. It would make the heart of a believer ache to think of the hypocrisy of most that usurp the name of Christians, and how cruelly they mock themselves. What a glory is offered them, and they lose it by their dallying! What a price is in their hands! What mercy is offered them, and they lose it by their dallying! What danger is before them, and they will

^a Superstition is the more deformed for its likeness to religion. And as wholesome meats corrupt to little worms; so good forms and orders corrupt into petty observances. Lord Bacon’s Essay of Superstition.

^b Mal. i. 8.

^c Lev. x. 1. 3.

^d Acts v.

^e Matt. xxi. 19.

^f Rev. iii. 15, 16.

fall into it by their dallying ! Doth not the weight of your salvation forbid this trifling ? You might better set the town on fire and make a jest of it, than jest your souls into the fire of hell. Then you will find that hell is no jesting matter : if you mock yourselves out of your salvation, where are you then ? If you play with time, and means, and mercy till they are gone, you ~~are~~ are undone for ever. O dally not till you are past remedy. Alas ! poor dreaming, trifling hypocrites ! Is time so swift, and life so short, and death so sure and near ; and God so holy, just, and terrible ; and heaven so glorious, and hell so hot, and both everlasting, and yet will you not be in earnest about your work ? Up and be doing, as you are men, and as ever you care what becomes of you for ever ! “ Depart from iniquity,” if you will “ name the name of Christ^s.” Let not a cheating world delude you for a moment, and have the kernel, the heart, while God hath but the empty shell. A mock religion will but keep up a mock hope, a mock peace, and a mock joy and comfort till satan have done his work, and be ready to unhood you and open your eyes. “ So are the paths of all that forget God, and the hypocrite’s hope shall perish^h.” “ For what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soul ? Will God hear his cry when trouble cometh upon himⁱ ?” “ Knowest thou not this of old, that the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment. Though his excellency mount up to the heavens, and his head reacheth unto the clouds ; yet he shall perish for ever like his own dung : they which have seen him shall say where is he^k ?” Away then with hypocritical formality and dalliance, and be serious and sincere for thy soul and with thy God.

PART IV.

Directions against inordinate Man-pleasing : or that overvaluing the Favour and Censure of Man, which is the fruit of Pride, and a great cause of Hypocrisy. Or, Directions against Idolizing Man.

As in other cases so in this, iniquity consisteth not simply in the heart’s neglect of God, but in the preferring of some competitor, and prevalence of some object which standeth

^s 2 Tim. ii. 19.

^h Job viii. 13.

ⁱ Job xxvii. 8, 9.

^k Job xx. 4—7.

up for an opposite interest¹. And so the obeying man before God and against him, and the valuing the favour and approbation of man before or against the approbation of God, and the fearing of man's censure or displeasure more than God's, is an Idolizing Man, or setting him up in the place of God. It turneth our chiefest observance, and care, and labour, and pleasure, and grief into this human, fleshly channel, and maketh all that to be but human in our hearts and lives, which (objectively) should be divine. Which is so great and dangerous a sin, partaking of so much impiety, hypocrisy, and pride, as that it deserveth a special place in my Directions, and in all watchfulness and consideration to escape it.

As all other creatures, so especially man, must be regarded and valued only in a due subordination and subser-viency to God. If they be valued otherwise, they are made his enemies, and so are to be hated, and are made the principal engine of the ruin of such as overvalue them. See what the Scripture saith of this sin: "Cease ye from man whose breath is in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of^m? "And call no man your Father upon the earth; for one is your Father which is in heavenⁿ." "And be not ye called Rabbi; for one is your Master, even Christ: but he that is greatest among you shall be your servant^o." "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm^p." "The Lord is on my side; I will not fear what man can do unto me. It is better to trust in the Lord, than to put confidence in man,—yea, in princes^q." "Let me not accept any man's person; neither let me give flattering titles unto man: for I know not to give flattering titles; in so doing my Maker would soon take me away^r." "As for me, is my complaint to man^s?" "Do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be a servant of Christ^t." "But with me it is a very small thing to be judged of you, or of man's judgment^u." "If a man come

¹ Non quam multis placeas, sed qualibus stude. Martin. Dumiens. de Morib.

^m Isa. ii. 22.

ⁿ Matt. xxiii. 9. Magna animi sublimitate carpentes se atque objurgantes Socrates contemnebat. Laert. in Socrat. lib. ii. sect. 26. p. 96.

^o Matt. xxiii. 8.

^p Jer. xx. 15.

^q Psal. cxviii. 6. 8, 9.

^r Job xxxii. 21, 22.

^s Job xxi. 4.

^t Gal. i. 10.

^u 1 Cor. iv. 3.

to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake^a." "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven^y." "Not with eye-service, as men-pleasers." "So we speak, not as pleasing men but God, who trieth our hearts^a." "Having men's persons in admiration because of advantage^a." This is enough to shew you what Scripture saith of this inordinate man-pleasing, or respect to man: and now I shall proceed to direct you to escape it.

Direct. 1. 'Understand well wherein the nature of this sin consisteth, that you may not run into the contrary extreme, but may know which way to bend your opposition.' I shall therefore first shew you, how far we may and must please men, and how far not.

1. Our parents, rulers, and superiors must be honoured, obeyed, and pleased in all things which they require of us, in the several places of authority which God hath given them over us: and this must be not merely as to man, but as to the officers of God, for whom, and from whom, (and not against him,) they have all their power^b.

2. We must in charity, and condescension, and meekness of behaviour, seek to please all men in order to their salvation. We must so thirst for the conversion of sinners, that we must become all things (lawful) to all men, that we may win them. We must not stand upon our terms, and keep at a distance from them, but condescend to the lowest, and bear the infirmities of the weak, and in things indifferent not take the course that pleaseth ourselves; but that, which by pleasing him, may edify our weak brother. We must forbear and forgive, and part with our right, and deny ourselves the use of our Christian liberty, were it as long as we live, if it be necessary to the saving of our brethren's souls, by removing the offence which hindereth them by preju-

^y Matt. v. 11.

^a Ephes. vi. 6. Col. iii. 22. 1 Thess. ii. 4.

^a Jude 16. When Chrysippus was asked why he exercised not himself with the most, he answered, if I should do as the most do, I should be no philosopher. Laert. in Chrysip. lib. vii. sect. 182. p. 479. Adulationi foedum crimen servitutis, malignitati falsa species libertatis inest. Tacit. Hist. lib. i. c. 1. Valpy's edit. vol. iii. p. 3. Secure conscience first, Qua semel amissa, postea nullus eris.

^b Rom. xiii. Exod. xx. 12. Titus iii. 1. 1 Pet. ii. 13. 2 Pet. ii. 10.

dice. We must not seek our own carnal ends, but the benefit of others, and do them all the good we can.

3. As our neighbour is commanded to love us as himself, we are bound by all lawful means to render ourselves amiable to him, that we may help and facilitate this his love, as it is more necessary to him than to us: for to help him in obeying so great a command must needs be a great duty. And therefore if his very sin possess him with prejudice against us, or cause him to distaste us for some indifferent thing, we must, as far as we can lawfully, remove the cause of his prejudice and dislike; (though he that hateth us for obeying God, must not be cured by our disobeying him.) We are so far from being obliged to displease men by surliness and morosity, that we are bound to pleasing gentleness, and brotherly kindness, and to all that carriage which is necessary to cure their sinful hatred or dislike.

4. We must not be self-conceited, and prefer a weak, unfurnished judgment of our own, before the greater wisdom of another; but in honour must prefer each other: and the ignorant must honour the knowledge and parts of others that excel them, and not be stiff in their own opinion, nor wise in their own eyes, nor undervalue another man's reasons or judgment; but be glad to learn of any that can teach them, in the humble acknowledgment of their own insufficiency.

5. Especially we must reverence the judgment of our able, faithful teachers, and not by pride set up our weaker judgment against them, and resist the truth which they deliver to us from God. Neither must we set light by the censures or admonitions of the lawful pastors of the church: when they are agreeable to the Word and judgment of God, they are very dreadful. As Tertullian saith, 'If any so offend as to be banished from communion of prayer, and assembly, and all holy commerce, it is a judgment foregoing the great judgment to come.' Yea, if the officers of Christ should wrong you in their censures by passion or mistake, while they act in their own charge about matters belonging to their cognisance and judgment, you must respectfully and patiently bear the wrong, so as not to dishonour and condemn the authority and office so abused.

6. If sober, godly persons, that are well acquainted with us, do strongly suspect us to be faulty where we discern it not ourselves, it should make us the more suspicious and

fearful : and if judicious persons fear you to be hypocrites, and no sound Christians, by observing your temper and course of life, it should make you search with the greater fear, and not to disregard their judgment. . And if judicious persons, especially ministers, shall tell a poor, fearful, doubting Christian, that they verily think their state is safe, it may be a great stay to them, and must not be slighted as nothing, though it cannot give them a certainty of their case. Thus far man's judgment must be valued.

7. A good name among men, which is the reputation of our integrity, is not to be neglected as a thing of naught ; for it is a mercy from God for which we must be thankful, and it is a useful means to our successful serving and honouring God. And the more eminent we are, and the more the honour of God and religion is joined with ours, or the good of men's souls dependeth on our reputation, the more careful we should be of it; and it may be a duty sometimes to vindicate it by the magistrate's justice, against a slander. Especially preachers, (whose success for the saving of their hearers depends much on their good name) must not despise it^c.

8. The censures of the most petulant, and the scorns of enemies, are not to be made light of, as they are their sins, which we must lament ; nor as they may provoke us to a more diligent search, and careful watchfulness over our ways. Thus far man's judgment is regardable.

But 1. We must know how frail, and erroneous, and unconstant a thing man is : and therefore not to be too high in our expectations from man. We must suppose that men will mistake us, and wrong us, and slander us, through ignorance, passion, prejudice, or self-interest. And when this befalls us, we must not account it strange and unexpected.

2. We must consider how far the enmity that is in lapsed man to holiness, and the ignorance, prejudice, and passion of the ungodly, will carry them to despise, and scorn, and slander all such as seriously and zealously serve God, and cross them in their carnal interest. And therefore, if for the sake of Christ and righteousness, we are accounted as the scorn and offscouring of all things, and as pestilent fel-

^c Quicquid de te probabiliter fingi potest, ne fingatur ante devita. Hieron. ad Nepot. Non solum veritas in hac parte sed etiam opinio studiose querenda est, ut te hypocritam agere interdum minime poeniteat, said one harshly enough to Acosta, ut lib. 4, c. 17. p. 413.

lows, and movers of sedition among the people, and such as are unworthy to live, and have all manner of evil spoken of us falsely, it must not seem strange or unexpected to us, nor cast us down, but we must bear it patiently, yea, and exceedingly rejoice in hope of our reward in heaven.

3. Considering what remnants of pride and self-conceit-
edness remain in many that have true grace, and how many hypocrites are in the church, whose religion consisteth in opinions and their several modes of worship; we must expect to be reproached and abused by such, as in opinions, and modes, and circumstances do differ from us, and take us therefore as their adversaries. A great deal of injustice, sometimes by slanders or reproach, and sometimes by greater violence, must be expected, from contentious professors of the same religion with ourselves: especially when the interest of their faction or cause requireth it: and especially if we bring any truth among them, which seemeth new to them, or crosseth the opinions which are there in credit, or would be reformers of them in any thing that is amiss.

4. No men must be pleased by sin, nor their favour preferred before the pleasing of God. Man's favour as against God, is to be despised, and their displeasure made light of. If doing our duty will displease them, let them be displeased; we can but pity them.

5. We must place none of our happiness in the favour or approbation of men, but account it as to ourselves to be a matter of no great moment; neither worth any great care or endeavour to obtain it, or grief for losing it. We must not only condemn it as compared to the approbation and favour of God, but we must value it but as other transitory things, in itself considered; estimating it as a means to some higher end, the service of God, and our own or other men's greater good: and further than it conduceth to some of these, it must be almost indifferent to us what men think or say of us: and the displeasure of all men, if unjust, must be reckoned with our light afflictions.

6. One truth of God, and the smallest duty, must be preferred before the pleasing and favour of all the men in the world. Though yet as a means to the promoting of a greater truth or duty, the favour and pleasing of men must be preferred before the uttering of a lesser truth, or doing a lesser good at that time: (because it is no duty then to do it.)

7. Our hearts are so selfish and deceitful, naturally, that when we are very solicitous about our reputation, we must carefully watch them lest self be intended, while God is pretended. And we must take special care, that we be sure it be the honour of God, and religion, and the good of souls, or some greater benefit than honour itself, that we value our honour and reputation for.

8. Man's nature is so prone to go too far in valuing our esteem with men, that we should more fear lest we err on that hand, than on the other, in undervaluing it. And it is far safer to do too little than too much, in the vindicating of our own reputation, whether by the magistrate's justice, or by disputing, or any contentious means.

9. We must not wholly rest on the judgment of any, about the state of our souls, nor take their judgment of us for infallible ; but use their help that we may know ourselves.

10. If ministers, or councils called General, do err and contradict the Word of God, we must do our best to discern it; and discerning it, must desert their error rather than the truth of God. As Calvin, and after him Paræus on 1 Cor. iv. 3., say, ' We must give an account of our doctrine to all men, that require it, especially to ministers and councils : but when a faithful pastor perceiveth himself oppressed with unrighteous and perverse designs and factions, and that there is no place for equity and truth, he ought to be careless of man's esteem, and to appeal to God, and fly to his tribunal. And if we see ourselves condemned, our cause being unpleaded, and judgment passed, our cause being unheard, let us lift up our minds to this magnanimity, as despising men's judgment, to expect with boldness the judgment of God,' and say with Paul, " With me it is a small matter to be judged of you, or of man's judgment ; I have one that judgeth me, even the Lord."

11. God must be enough for a gracious soul, and we must know that " in his favour is life," and his " loving kindness is better than life itself:" and this must be our care and labour, that " whether living or dying we may be accepted of him:" and if we have his approbation it must satisfy us, though all the world condemn us. Therefore having faithfully done our duty, we must leave the matter of our reputation to God ; who, if our ways please him, can make our enemies to be at peace with us, (or be harmless to

us as if they were no enemies.) As we must quietly leave it to him what measure of wealth we shall have, so also what measure of honour we shall have. It is our duty to love and honour, but not to be beloved and honoured.

12. The prophecy of our Saviour must be still believed, that the "world will hate us;" and his example must be still before our eyes, who submitted to be spit upon, and scorned and buffeted, and slandered as a traitor or usurper of the crown, and "made himself of no reputation," and "endured the cross," and "despised the shame;" leaving us an example that we "should follow his steps, who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth; who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not, but committed all to him that judgeth righteously^d." This is the usage that must be the Christian's expectation, and not to be well spoken of by all, nor to have the applause and honour of the world.

13. It is not only the approbation of the ignorant and ungodly that we must thus set light by; but even of the most learned and godly themselves, so as to bear their censures as an easy burden, when God is pleased this way to try us; and to be satisfied in God alone, and the expectation of his final judgment^e.

Direct. II. 'Remember that the favour and pleasing of man is one of your snares, that would prevail against your pleasing God:' therefore watch against the danger of it, as you must do against other earthly things.

Direct. III. 'Remember how silly a creature man is; and that his favour can be no better than himself.' The thoughts or words of a mortal worm, are matters of no considerable value to us.

Direct. IV. 'Remember that it is the judgment of God alone, that your life or death for ever doth depend upon: and how little you are concerned in the judgment of man.'

1. An humbled soul, that hath felt what it is to have displeased God, and what it is to be under his curse, and what it is to be reconciled to him by the death and intercession of Jesus Christ, is so taken up in seeking the favour of God, and is so troubled with every fear of his displeasure, and is

^d 1 Pet. ii. 21, 22.

^e We must go further than Seneca, who said, *Male de me loquuntur, sed mali: moverer si de me Mar. Cato, si Lælius sapiens, si duo Scipiones ista loquerentur: nunc malis displicere, laudari est.*

so delighted with the sense of his love, as that he can scarce have while to mind so small a matter as the favour or displeasure of a man. God's favour is enough for him, and so precious to him, that if he find that he hath this, so small a matter as the favour of a man, will scarce be missed by him.

2. God only is our supreme Judge, and our governors as officers limited by him: but for others, if they will be usurpers, and set themselves in the throne of God, and there let fly their censures upon things and persons which concern them not, why should we seem much concerned in it? If a beggar step up into a seat of judicature, and there condemn one, and fine another, will you fear him, or laugh at him? Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own master doth he stand or fall. Men may step up into the throne of God, and there presume to judge others according to their interests and passions; but God will quickly pull them down, and teach them better to know their places. How like is the common censure of the world, to the game of boys, that will hold an assize, and make a judge, and try and condemn one another in sport! And have we not a greater Judge to fear?

3. It is God only that passeth the final sentence, from whom there is no appeal to any other. But from human judgment there lieth an appeal to God^f. Their judgment must be judged of by him: things shall not stand as now men censure them. Many a bad cause is now judged good, through the multitude or greatness of those that favour it: and many a good cause is now condemned. Many a one is taken as a malefactor because he obeyeth God, and doth his duty. But all these things must be judged over again, by him that hath denounced a "woe to them that call evil good and good evil; that put darkness for light and light for darkness^g." "He that saith to the wicked, thou art righteous, people shall curse him, nations shall abhor him^h." It were ill with the best of the servants of Christ, if the judgment of the world must stand, who condemn them as fools, and hypocrites, and what they list: then the devil's judgment would stand. But he is the wise man that God will judge to be wise at last; and he only is the happy man that God calls happy. The erring judgment of a creature

^f See Dr. Boys' Postil. p. 42, 43. Marlorat. in 1 Cor. iv. 3.

^g Isai. vi. 20.

^h Prov. xxiv. 24.

is but like an ignorant man's writing the names of several things upon an apothecary's boxes; if he write the names of poisons upon some, and of antidotes on others, when there are no such things within them, they are not to be estimated according to those names¹. How different are the names that God and the world do put upon things and persons now! And how few now approve of that which God approveth of, and will justify at last! How many will God judge heterodox and wicked, that men judged orthodox, and worthy of applause? And how many will God judge orthodox and sincere, that were called heretics and hypocrites by men! God will not verify every word against his servants, which angry men, or contentious disputants say against them. The learning, or authority, or other advantages of the contenders, may now bear down the reasons and reputations of more wise and righteous men than they, which God will restore and vindicate at last. The names of Luther, Zuinglius, Calvin, and many other excellent servants of the Lord, are now made odious in the writings and reports of Papists, by their impudent lies: but God judgeth otherwise, with more righteous judgment. O what abundance of persons and causes will be justified at the dreadful day of God, which the world condemned! And how many will be there condemned, that were justified by the world! O blessed day! most desirable to the just! most terrible to the wicked and every hypocrite! How many things will then be set straight, that now are crooked! And how many innocents and saints will then have a resurrection of their murdered names, that were buried by the world in a heap of lies, and their enemies never thought of their reviving. O look to that final judgment of the Lord, and you will take men's censures but as the shaking of a leaf.

4. It is God only that hath power to execute his sentence, to our happiness or misery: "there is one lawgiver that is able to save and to destroy^k." If he say to us, "Come ye blessed," we shall be happy, though devils and men should curse us: for those that he blesseth shall be blessed. If he

¹ The open daylight of truth doth not shew the masks, and mummeries, and triumphs of the world, half so stately and gallant as candlelight doth. Lord Bacon's *Essay of Truth*.

^k James iv. 12.

condemn to hell, the applause of the world will fetch no man out, nor give him ease. A great name on earth, or histories written in their applause, or a gilded monument over their bones, are a poor relief to damned souls. And the barking of the wicked, and their scorns on earth, are no diminution to the joy or glory of the souls that shine and triumph with Christ. It is our Lord that "hath the keys of death and hell¹." Please him, and you are sure to escape, though the pope, and all the wicked of the world, should thunder out against you their most direful curses. Woe to us if the wicked could execute all their malicious censures! Then how many saints would be in hell! But if it be God that justifies us, how inconsiderable a matter is it, who they are that condemn us; or what be their pretences^m!

Direct. v. 'Remember that the judgment of ungodly men, is corrupted and directed by the devil: and to be overruled by their censures, or too much to fear them, is to be overruled by the devil, and to be afraid of his censures of us.' And will you honour him so much? Alas! it is he that puts those thoughts into the mind of the ungodly, and those reproachful words into their mouths. To prefer the judgment of a man before God's, is odious enough, though you did not prefer the devil's judgment.

Direct. vi. 'Consider what a slavery you choose, when you thus make yourselves the servants of every man, whose censures you fear, and whose approbation you are ambitious of.' "Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of menⁿ:" that is, do not needlessly enthrall yourselves. What a task have men-pleasers? They have as many masters as beholders! No wonder if it take them off from the service of God: for the "friendship of the world is enmity to God:" and he that will thus be "a friend of the world, is an enemy to God." They cannot serve two masters, God and the world. You know men will condemn you, if you be true to God: if, therefore, you must needs have the favour of men, you must take it alone without God's favour. A man-pleaser cannot be true to God; because he is a servant to the enemies of his service, the wind of a man's mouth will drive him about as the chaff, from any duty, and to any sin. How servile a person is a man-pleaser! How many

¹ Rev. i. 18.^m Rom. viii. 33.ⁿ 1 Cor. vii. 23.

masters hath he, and how mean ones ! It perverteth the course of your hearts and lives, and turneth all from God to this unprofitable way°.

Direct. vii. ‘Remember what a pitiful reward you seek.’ “Verily,” saith our Lord, concerning hypocrites and man-pleasers, “they have their reward.” O miserable reward ! The thought and breath of mortal men ! Instead of God—instead of heaven ; this is their reward ! Their happiness will be to lie in hell, and remember that they were well spoken of on earth ! and that once they were accounted religious, learned, wise, or honourable ! and to remember that they preferred this reward before everlasting happiness with Christ ! If this be not gain, your labour is all lost, which you lay out in hunting for applause. If this be enough to spend your time for, and to neglect your God for, and to lose your souls for, rejoice then in the hypocrite’s reward.

Direct. viii. ‘And remember that honour is such a thing as is found sooner by an honest contempt of it, than by an inordinate affection of it, and seeking it.’ It is a shadow which goeth from you if you follow it, and follows you as fast as you go from it. Whose names are now more honourable upon earth, than those prophets, and apostles, and martyrs, and preachers, and holy, mortified Christians, who in their days set lightest by the approbation of the world, and were made the scorn or foot-ball of the times in which they lived ? Those that have been satisfied with the approbation of their heavenly Father, who saw them “in secret,” have been “rewarded by him openly.” It is even in the eyes of rational men, a far greater honour to live to God, above worldly honour, than to seek it. And so much as a man is perceived to affect and seek it, so much he loseth of it : for he is thought to need it ; and men perceive that he plays a low and pitiful game, that is so desirous of their applause ! As they would condemn a man that should lick up the spittle of every man where he comes, so will they condemn him that liveth on their thoughts and breath, and honour him more that lives on God.

Direct. ix. ‘If nothing else will cure this disease, at least let the impossibility of pleasing men, and attaining your ends, suffice against so fruitless an attempt.’ And

° Offendet te superbus contemptu, dives contumelia, petulans injuria, lividus malignitate, pugnax contentione, ventosus et mendax vanitate. Non feres a suspicio se timeri, a pertinace vinci, a delicato fastidiri. Senec. de Ira. lib. 3. c. 8. Elz. p. 65.

here I shall shew you how impossible it is, or, at least a thing which you cannot reasonably expect.

1. Remember what a multitude you have to please; and when you have pleased some, how many more will be still displeased, and how many displeased, when you have done your best^p. Alas! we are insufficient at once to observe all those that observe us, and would be pleased by us. You are like one that hath but twelve pence in his purse, and a thousand beggars come about him for it, and every one will be displeased if he have it not all. If you resolve to give all that you have to the poor, if you do it to please God, you may attain your end: but if you do it to please them, when you have pleased those few that you gave it to, perhaps twice as many will revile or curse you, because they had nothing. The beggar that speeds well will proclaim you liberal; and the beggar that speeds ill, will proclaim you niggardly and unmerciful; and so you will have more to offend and dishonour you, than to comfort you by their praise, if that must be your comfort.

2. Remember that all men are so selfish, that their expectations will be higher than you are able to satisfy. They will not consider your hindrances, or avocations, or what you do for others, but most of them look to have as much to themselves, as if you had nobody else to mind but them. Many and many a time, when I have had an hour or a day to spend, a multitude have every one expected that I should have spent it with them. When I visit one, there are ten offended that I am not visiting them at the same hour: when I am discoursing with one, many more are offended that I am not speaking to them all at once: if those that I speak to account me courteous, and humble, and respectful, those that I could not speak to, or but in a word, account me discourteous and morose. How many have censured me, because I have not allowed them the time, which God and conscience commanded me to spend upon greater and more necessary work! If you have any office to give, or benefit to be-

^p Unus mihi pro populo est, et populus pro uno. Sen. Ep. 7. ex Democr. Elz. p. 16. Satis sunt mihi pauci, satis est unus, satis est nullus. Senec. Epist. 7. Socrates was condemned by the votes of more against him of his judges, than those that absolved him: and they would not suffer Plato to speak for him. His sentence was, Jura violat Socrates, quos ex majorum instituto suscepit civitas, deos esse negans, alia vero nova dæmonia inducens. Laert. in Socrat. lib. ii. sect. 40. p. 104.

stow, which one only can have, every one thinketh himself the fittest; and when you have pleased one that hath it, you have displeased all that went without it, and missed of their desires.

3. ‘You have abundance to please that are so ignorant, unreasonable, and weak, that they take your greatest virtues for your faults,’ and know not when you do well or ill: and yet none more bold in censuring than those that least understand the things they censure⁹. Many and many a time my own and other’s sermons have been censured, and openly defamed, for that which never was in them, upon the ignorance or heedlessness of a censorious hearer: yea, for that which they directly spoke against; because they were not understood: especially he that hath a close style, free from tautology, where every word must be marked by him that will not misunderstand, shall frequently be misreported.

4. ‘You will have many factious zealots to please, who being strangers to the love of holiness, Christianity, and unity, are ruled by the interest of an opinion or sect:’ and these will never be pleased by you, unless you will be one of their side or party, and conform yourself to their opinions. If you be not against them, but set yourselves to reconcile and end the differences in the church, they will hate you as not promoting their opinions, but weakening them by some abhorred syncretisms. As in civil, so in ecclesiastical wars, the firebrands cannot endure the peaceable: if you will be neuters, you shall be used as enemies. If you be never so much for Christ, and holiness, and common truth, all is nothing, unless you be also for them, and their conceits.

5. ‘Most of the world are haters of holiness, and have a serpentine enmity to the image of God; being not renewed by the Holy Ghost: and will not be pleased with you, unless you will sin against your Lord, and do as they do.’ “Walking in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries, wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you; who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead^r.” You must

⁹ Quæ ego scio populus non probat: quæ probat populus ego nescio. Sen. Epis. 29. Imperitia in hominibus majori ex parte dominatur, et multitudo verborum. Cleobulus, in Laert. lib. i. sect. 91. p. 57.

^r 1 Pet. iv. 3, 4, 5.

be counted as Lot among the Sodomites, a busy fellow that comes among them to make himself their judge, and to control them, if you tell them of their sin. You shall be called a precise, hypocritical coxcomb, (or somewhat much worse,) if you will not be as bad as they, and if by your abstinence (though you say nothing,) you seem to reprehend their sensuality and contempt of God. Among bedlams you must play the bedlam, if you will escape the fangs of their revilings. And can you hope to please such men as these?

6. 'You shall have satanical God-haters, and men of seared and desperate consciences to please, that are malicious and cruel, and will be pleased with nothing but some horrid iniquity, and the damning of your own souls, and drawing others to damnation.' Like that monster of Milan, that when he had got down his enemy, made him blaspheme God in hope to save his life, and then stabbed him, calling it a noble revenge, that killed the body, and damned the soul at once. There are such in the world, that will so visibly act the devil's part, that they would debauch your consciences with the most horrid perjuries, perfidiousness, and impiety; that they may triumph over your miserable souls.^s And if you think it worth the wilful damning of your souls, it is possible they may be pleased. If you tell them, we cannot please you, unless we will be dishonest, and displease God, and sin against our knowledge and consciences, and hazard our salvation, they will make but a jest of such arguments as these, and expect you should venture your souls and all upon their opinions, and care as little for God and your souls as they do. Desperate sinners are loath to go to hell alone: it is a torment to them to see others better than themselves. They that are cruel and unmerciful to themselves, and have no pity on their own souls, but will sell them for a whore, or for preferment, and honour, or sensual delights, will scarce have mercy on the souls of others; "his blood be on us, and on our children^t,"

7. 'You will have rigorous, captious, uncharitable and unrighteous men to please, who will "make a man an offender for a word, and lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just for a thing of nought, and watch

^s Inter hæc quid agant quibus loquendi à Christo officium mandatur? Deo displicent, si taceant; hominibus si loquantur. Salvian. ad Eccles. Cath. lib. 4.

^t Matt. xxvii. 25.

for iniquity^u.”’ That have none of that charity which covereth faults, and interpreteth words and actions favourably; nor any of that justice which causeth men to do as they would be done by, and judge as they would be judged; but judging without mercy, are like to have judgment without mercy. And are glad when they can find any matter to reproach you: and if once they meet with it, (true or false) they will never forget it, but dwell as the fly on the ulcerated place^x.

8. ‘You will have passionate persons to please,’ whose judgments are blinded, and are not capable of being pleased. Like the sick and sore that are hurt with every touch; and at last, saith Seneca, with the very conceit that you touched them. How can you please them, when displeasedness is their disease, that abideth within them, at the very heart?

9. ‘You will find that censoriousness is a common vice, and though few are competent judges of your actions, as not being acquainted with all the case, yet every one almost will be venturing to cast in his censure.’ A proud, presumptuous understanding is a very common vice; which thinks itself presently capable of judging, as soon as it heareth but a piece of the case, and is not conscious of its own fallibility, though it have daily experience of it. Few are at your elbow, and none in your heart, and therefore know not the circumstances and reasons of all that you do, nor hear what you have to say for yourselves; and yet they will presume to censure you, who would have absolved you, if they had but heard you speak. It is rare to meet even with professors of greatest sincerity, that are very tender and fearful of sinning, in this point of rash, ungrounded judging, without capacity or call.

10. ‘You live among unpeaceable tattlers and tale-carriers, that would please others by accusing you.’ Who is it that hath ears that hath not such vermin as these earwigs busy at them? Except here and there an upright man, whose angry countenance hath still driven away such backbiting tongues. And all shall be said behind your backs, when

^u Isa. xxix. 20, 21.

^x Even for the greatness of your services, you may perish, by the suspicion and envy of those great ones whom you served: as is proved by the case of Saul and David, Belisarius, Narses, Bonifacius, the two sons of Eumenes imprisoned, and one slain, and multitudes such like.

you are incapable of answering for yourselves. And if it be a man that the hearers think well of, that accuseth or backbiteth you, they think it lawful then to believe them: and most that are their friends, and of their party, and for their interest, shall be sure to be thought so honest as to be credible. And it is not strange, for a learned, ingenious, yea, a godly person, to be too forward in uttering, from the mouths of others, an evil report: and then the hearer thinks he is fully justified for believing it, and reporting it again to others. David himself, by the temptation of a Ziba, is drawn to wrong Mephibosheth the son of his great deserving friend^y. No wonder then if Saul do hearken to a Doeg to the wrong of David, and murder of the priests. “The words of a tale-bearer are as wounds^z.” “Where no wood is, the fire goeth out: so where there is no tale-bearer the strife ceaseth^a.” And when these are still near men, and you far off, it is easy for them to continue the most odious representation of the most laudable person’s actions in the world.

11. ‘The imperfection of all men’s understandings and godliness is so great, that the differences of judgment that are among the best, will tend to the injury and undervaluing of their brethren.’ One is confident that his way is right, and another is confident of the contrary: and to how great contendings and injuries such differences may proceed, he that knoweth not in this age, shall not know for me^b. We need not go to Paul and Barnabas for an instance, (that was a far lighter case:) nor to Epiphanius, Hierom, and Chrysostom: nor to those ages and tragedies of contending bishops, that in the eastern and western churches have been before us: every one thinking his cause so plain, as to justify himself, in all that he saith and doth against those that presume to differ from him. And surely you may well expect some displeasure, even from good and learned men, when the churches have felt such dreadful concussions, and bleedeth to this day, by so horrid divisions, through the remnants of that pride and ignorance which her reverend guides have still been guilty of^c.

^y 2 Sam. xvi. 3, 4.

^z Prov. xviii. 8.

^a Prov. xxvi. 20.

^b Persium non curo legere: Lælium Decimum volo: ut Lucilius.

^c I may add that you have guilty consciences to please. And the guilty are, as Seneca speaks, like one that hath an ulcer, that at first is hurt with every touch, and at last even with the suspicion of a touch. *Tutum aliqua res in mala conscientia pre-*

12. ‘You have men of great mutability to please;’ that one hour may be ready to worship you as gods, and the next to stone you, or account you as devils, as they did by Paul, and Christ himself. What a weathercock is the mind of man! especially of the vulgar and the temporizers! When you have spent all your days in building your reputation on this sand, one blast of wind or storm at last, doth tumble it down, and all your cost and labour are lost. Serve men as submissively and carefully as you can; and after all, some accident or failing of their unrighteous expectations, may make all that ever you did forgotten, and turn you out of the world with Wolsey’s groans, ‘If I had served God as faithfully as man, I had been better rewarded, and not forsaken in my distress.’ How many have fallen by the hands or frowns of those whose favour they had dearly purchased, perhaps at the price of their salvation! If ever you put such confidence in a friend, as not to consider that it is possible he may one day prove your enemy, you know not man; and may perhaps be better taught to know him, to your cost.

13. ‘Every man living shall unavoidably be engaged by God himself, in some duties which are very liable to misconstruction, and will have an outside and appearance of evil, to the offence of those that know not all the inside and circumstances.’ And hence it comes to pass, that a great part of history is little worthy of regard; because the actions of public persons are discerned but by the halves by most that write of them. They write most by hearsay; or know but the outside and seemings of things, and not the spirit, and life, and reality of the case. Men have not the choosing of their own duties, but God maketh them by his law and providence: and it pleaseth him oft to try his servants in this kind: many of the circumstances of their actions shall re-

stat, nulla securum. Putat enim si etiam si non deprehenditur, posse deprehendi; et inter somnos movetur, et quoties alicujus scelus loquitur, de suo cogitat. Senec. Epis. 105. Elz. p. 416. Prima et maxima peccantium poena est peccasse. Hæc et secundæ poenæ premunt et sequuntur, timere semper et expavescere et securitati diffidere. Senec. Epis. 97. Elz. p. 380. Tyranno amici quoque sæpe suspecti sunt. Tu ergo, si tyrannidem tuto tenere cupis, atque in ea constabiliri: civitatis principes tolle, sive illi amici, sive inimici videantur. Thrasybulus in Epist. Periand. in Laert. lib. i. sect. 100. p. 64. Plerorumque ingenium est, ut errata aliorum vel minima perscrutentur, benefacta vero vel in propatulo posita prætereant; sicut vultures corpora viva et sana non sentiunt, morticina vero et cadavera tametsi longe remota odore persequuntur. Galiadus in Arcan. Jesuit. p. 55.

main unknown to men, that would justify them if they knew them; and account them as notorious, scandalous persons, because they know them not. How like to evil was the Israelites taking the goods of the Egyptians? and how likely to lay them open to their censure? So was Abraham's attempt to sacrifice his son: and so was David's eating the shew-bread, and dancing almost naked before the ark; Christ's eating and drinking with publicans and sinners; Paul's circumcising Timothy, and purifying in the temple; with abundance such like, which fall out in the life of every Christian. No wonder if Joseph thought once of putting Mary away, till he knew the evidence of her miraculous conception; and how liable was she to censure, by those that knew it not? O, therefore, how vain is the judgment of man! And how contrary is it frequently to the truth! And with what caution must history be read! And \textcircled{O} how desirable is the great day of God, when all human censure shall be justly censured!

14. 'The perverseness of many is so great, that they require contradictions and impossibilities of you, to tell you that they are resolved never to be pleased by you.' If John use fasting, they say, "he hath a devil:" if Christ come "eating and drinking," they say, "behold a gluttonous person, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners^d." If your judgment and practice be conformable to superiors, especially if they have admitted of a change, you shall be judged mere knaves and temporizers: if they are not, you shall be judged disobedient, refractory, and seditious. If you speak fair and pleasingly, they will call you flatterers and dissemblers: if you speak more freely, though in a necessary case, they will say you rail. If I accept of preferment, they will say, I am ambitious, proud, and worldly: If I refuse it, (how modestly soever,) they will say, I am discontented, and have seditious designs. If I preach not when I am forbidden, I shall be accused as forsaking the calling I undertook, and obeying man against God: if I do preach, I shall be accounted disobedient and seditious. If a friend or kinsman desire me to help him to some place or preferment which he is not fit for, or which would tend to another's wrong; if I should grant his desire, I shall be taken for dishonest, that by partiality wrong another: if I deny

^d Matt. xi. 18, 19.

it him, I shall be called unnatural or unfriendly, and worse than an infidel. If I give to the poor as long as I have it, I shall be censured for ceasing when I have no more: they that know not whether you have it to give or not, will be displeased if you do not; and if many years you should maintain them freely, it is all as nothing as soon as you cease, either because your stock is spent, or because some other is made the necessary object of your charity. If you be wronged in your estate, if you go to law, they will say, you are contentious: if you let go your estate to avoid contention, they will say, you are silly fools or idiots. If you do any good works of charity to the knowledge of men, they will say, you are hypocrites, and do it for applause: if you do it secretly, that no one know of it, they will say, you are covetous, and have no good works, and though you make a greater profession of religion, you do no good; and others shall be censured so also for your sakes. If you be pleasant and merry, they will censure you as light and vain: if you be more grave and sad, they will say, you are melancholy or discontent. In a word, whatever you do, be sure by some it will be condemned; and do or not do, speak or be silent, you shall certainly displease, and never escape the censures of the world.

15. 'There is among men so great a contrariety of judgments, and dispositions, and interests, that they will never agree among themselves; and if you please one, the rest will be thereby displeased^e.' He that you please is an enemy to another; and therefore you displease his enemy, by pleasing him. Sometimes, state differences divide kingdoms into parties, and one party will be displeased with you if you be of the other, and both if you are neuters, or dislike them both: and each party think their cause will justify any accusations they can charge you with, or odious titles they can give you, if not any sufferings they can bring upon you. Church differences and sects have been found in all ages, and you cannot be of the opinion of every party: when the world aboundeth with such variety of conceits, you cannot be of all at once. And if you be of one party,

^e When the divines of Heidelberg appointed Pitiscus to write his Irenicon, his very writing for peace, and to persuade the Reformed from apologies and disputes, did give occasion of renewed stirs to the Saxon and Swedish divines to tell men, that they could have no peace with us. Scultet. Carric. p. 46.

you must displease the rest ; if you are of one side in controverted opinions, the other side accounteth you erroneous : and how far will the supposed interest of their cause and party carry them ? One half of the Christian world, at this day, condemneth the other half as schismatical at least, the other half doing the like for them. And can you be Papists, and Protestants, and Greeks, and every thing ? If not, you must displease as many as you please. Yea, more, if mutable men shall change never so oft, they will expect that you change as fast as they, and whatever their contrary interests require, you must follow them in ; one year you must swear, and in another you must unswear all again : whatever cause or action they engage in be it never so devilish, you must approve of it and countenance it, and all that they do you must say is well done. In a word, you must teach your tongue to say or swear any thing, and you must sell your innocency, and hire out your consciences wholly to their service, or you cannot please them. Micaiah must say with the rest of the prophets, “ Go, and prosper,” or else he will be hated, as not prophesying good of Ahab, but evil^f. And how can you serve all interests at once. It seems the providence of God hath, as of purpose, wheeled about the affairs of the world, to try and shame man-pleasers and temporizers in the sight of the sun. It is evident then, that if you will please all you must at once both speak and be silent, and verify contradictions, and be in many places at once, and be of all men’s minds, and for all men’s way. For my part, I mean to see the world a little better agreed among themselves, before I will make it my ambition to please them. If you can reconcile all their opinions, and interests, and complexions, and dispositions, and make them all of one mind and will, then hope to please them.

16. ‘ If you excel in any one virtue or duty, even that shall not excuse you from the contrary defamation, so unreasonable are malicious men.’ Nothing in the world can secure you from censorious, slanderous tongues^g. The perfect holiness of Jesus Christ could not secure him from being called a gluttonous person and a wine-bibber, and a friend of publicans and sinners. His wonderful contempt of

^f 1 Kings xxii. 8.

^g They that saw Stephen’s face as it had been the face of an angel, and heard him tell them that he saw heaven open, yet stoned him to death as a blasphemer. Acts vi. 15. vii. 55—60.

worldly dignities and honours, and his subjection to Cæsar, could not secure him from being slandered and crucified as Cæsar's enemy. The great piety of the ancient Christians excused them not from the vulgar calumny, that they met together for filthiness in the dark ; nor from the cry of the rabble, ' Tollite impios,' ' away with the ungodly,' because they were against the worshipping of idols. I have known those that have given all that ever they had to the poor except their food and necessaries, and yet (though it was to a considerable value) have been reproached as unmerciful, by those that have not had what they expected. Many a one hath been defamed with scandalous rumours of uncleanness, that have lived in untainted chastity all their lives. The most eminent saints have been defamed as guilty of the most horrid crimes, which never entered into their thoughts. The principal thing that ever I bent my studies and care about, hath been the reconciling, unity, and peace of Christians, and against unpeaceableness, uncharitableness, turbulency, and division : and yet some have been found, whose interest and malice have commanded them to charge me with that very sin, which I have spent my days, my zeal, and study against. How oft have contrary factions charged me with perfectly contrary accusations ? I can scarce remember the thing that I can do in all the world, that some will not be offended at. Nor the duty so great and clear, that some will not call my sin. Nor the self-denial so great (to the hazard of my life) which hath not been called self-seeking, or something clean contrary to what it was indeed. Instead therefore of serving and pleasing this malicious, unrighteous world, I condemn their blind and unjust censures, and appeal to the most righteous God^h.

17. ' If you have a design for a name of honour when you are dead, consider what power a prevailing faction may have to corrupt the history of your life, and represent you to posterity perfectly contrary to what you are ; and how impossible it is for posterity to know whose history is the product of malicious, shameless lies, and whose is the narrative of impartial truth.' What contrary histories are there of particular persons and actions written by men of the same religion : as of Pope Gregory VII. and the emperors

^h Socrates primus de vitæ ratione disseruit, ac primus philosophorum damnatus moritur. See Laert. in Socrat. lib. ii. sect. 45. p. 108. Multa prius de immortalitate animarum ac præclara dissertus. Ibid.

that contended with him; and about Pope Joan, and many the like cases, where you may read scores of historians on one side, and on the other[†].

18. ‘Remember that the holiest saints or apostles could never please the world, nor escape their censures, slanders, and cruelties; no, nor Jesus Christ himself.’ And can you think by honest means to please them better than Christ and all his saints have done? You have not the wisdom that Christ had to please men, and to avoid offence. You have not the perfect innocency and unblamableness that Christ had; you cannot heal their sicknesses and infirmities, and do that good to them to please and win them as Jesus Christ did: you cannot convince them, and constrain them to reverence you by manifold miracles as Jesus Christ did. Can you imitate such an excellent pattern as is set you by the holy, patient, charitable, unwearied apostle Paul[‡]. If you cannot, how can you please them that would not be pleased by such inimitable works of love and power? The more Paul “loved” some of his hearers, the “less he was beloved[§].” They used him “as an enemy for telling them the truth^{||}.” Though he “became all things to all men;” he could “save but some,” nor “please but some[¶].” And what are you that you should better please them?

19. ‘Godliness, virtue, and honesty themselves will not please the world, and therefore you cannot hope to please them by that which is not pleasing to them.’ Will men be pleased by that which they hate? and by the actions which they think accuse them and condemn them? And if you will be ungodly and vicious to please them, you sell your souls, your conscience, and your God to please them. God and they are not pleased with the same ways; and which do you think should first be pleased? If you displease him for their favour, you will buy it dear[°].

[†] Fama liberrima principum iudex. Seneca in consolat. ad Marciam, cap. iv. Elz. p. 159.

[‡] Acts xx. 1 Cor. iv. ix. 2 Cor. iv. v. vi. x. xi. xii.

[§] 2 Cor. xii. 15.

^{||} Gal. iv. 16.

[¶] 1 Cor. ix. 22.

[°] Aristides, having got the surname of Just, was hated by the Athenians, who decreed to banish him; and every one that voted against him being to write down his name, a clown that could not write, came to Aristides to desire him to write down Aristides’s name: he asked him whether he knew Aristides? and the man answered, no; but he would vote against him because his name was Just. Aristides concealing himself fulfilled the man’s desire, and wrote his own name in the roll and gave it him: so easily did he bear it to be condemned of the world for being Just. Plutarch in

20. 'They are not pleased with God himself; yea, no man doth displease so many and so much as he.' And can you do more than God to please them? or can you deserve their favour more than he? They are daily displeased with his works of providence. One would have rain, when another would have none; one would have the winds to serve his voyage, and another would have them in a contrary end; one party is displeased, because another is pleased and exalted. Every enemy would have his cause succeed, and the victory to be his; every contender would have all go on his side. God must be ruled by them, and fit himself to the interest of the most unjust, and to the will of the most vicious, and do as they would have him, and be a servant to their lusts, or they will not be pleased with him. And his holy nature, and his holy Word, and holy ways displease them more than his ordinary providence. They are displeased that his Word is so precise and strict, and that he commandeth them so holy and so strict a life, and that he threateneth all the ungodly with damnation; he must alter his laws, and make them more loose, and fit them to their fleshly interest and lusts, and speak as they would have him, without any difficulties, before they will be pleased with them (unless he alter their minds and hearts). And how do you think they will be pleased with him at last, when he fulfils his threatenings? When he killeth them and turneth their bodies to dust, and their guilty souls to torment and despair.

21. 'How can you please men that cannot please themselves?' Their own desire and choice will please them but a little while. Like children, they are soon weary of that which they cried for; they must needs have it, and when they have it, it is naught and cast away: they are neither pleased with it, nor without it. They are like sick persons that long for every meat or drink they think of; and when they have it they cannot get it down, for the sickness is still within them that causeth their displeasure. How many do trouble and torment themselves by their passions and folly from day to day? and can you please such self-displeasers?

'How can you please all others, when you cannot please yourselves?' If you are persons fearing God, and feel the

Aristide. It was not only Socrates that was thus used, saith Laertius, Nam Homerum velut insipientem drachmis quinquaginta mulctarunt, Tyrtaeumque mentis impotem dixerunt, &c. lib. ii. sect. 46. p. 106. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? Matt. xxiii.

burden of your sins, and have life enough to be sensible of your diseases, I dare say there are none in the world so displeasing to you as you are to yourselves. You carry that about you, and feel that within you which displeaseth you more than all the enemies you have in the world. Your passions and corruptions, your want of love to God, and your strangeness to him and the life to come, the daily faultiness of your duties and your lives, are your daily burden, and displease you most. And if you be not able, and wise, and good enough to please yourselves, can you be able, and wise, and good enough to please the world? As your sins are nearest to yourselves, so are your graces; and as you know more evil by yourselves than others know, so you know more good by yourselves. That little fire will not warm all the room, which will not warm the hearth it lieth on.

Direct. x. ‘Remember what a life of unquietness and continual vexation you choose. If you place your peace or happiness in the good-will or word of man^p.’ For having shewed you how impossible a task you undertake, it must needs follow that the pursuit of it must be a life of torment: to engage yourselves in so great cares, and be sure to be disappointed! To make that your end, which you cannot attain! To find that you labour in vain, and daily meet with displeasure instead of the favour you expected, must needs be a very grievous life. You are like one that dwelleth on the top of a mountain, and yet cannot endure the wind to blow upon him; or like him that dwelleth in a wood, and yet is afraid of the shaking of a leaf. You dwell among a world of ulcerated, selfish, contradictory, mutable, unpleaseable minds, and yet you cannot endure their displeasure. Are you magistrates? The people will murmur at you; and those that are most incompetent and incapable will be the most forward to censure you, and think that they could govern much better than you^q. Those that bear the necessary burdens of the common safety and defence will say that you oppress them; and the malefactors that are punished will say you deal unmercifully by them; and those that have a cause never so unjust will say that you wrong them, if it go not on their side. Are you pastors

^p Vis esse in mundo? Contemni et temnere disce. Abr. Bucholtzer.

^q Socrates dicenti cuidam, nonne tibi ille maledicit? Non inquit, mihi enim ista non adsunt. Diog. Laert. lib. ii. sect. 36. p. 102.

and teachers? You will seem too rough to one, and too smooth to another; yea, too rough to the same man when by reproof or censure you correct his faults, who censurcth you as too smooth and a friend to sinners, when you are to deal in the cause of others: no sermon that you preach is like to be pleasing to all your hearers, nor any of your ministerial works^r. Are you lawyers? The clients that lost their cause, behind your backs, will call you unconscionable, and say you betrayed them; and those that prevailed will call you covetous, and tell how much money you took of them, and how little you did for it: so that it is no wonder that among the vulgar your profession is the matter of their reproach. Are you physicians? You will be accused as guilty of the death of many that die, and as covetous takers of their money whether the patient die or live; for this is the common talk of the vulgar, except of some few with whom your care hath much succeeded. Are you tradesmen? Most men that buy of you are so selfish that, except you will beggar yourselves, they will say you deceive them, and deal unconscionably and sell too dear; little do they mind the necessary maintenance of your families, nor care whether you live or gain by your trading, but if you will wrong yourselves to sell them a good pennyworth, they will say you are very honest men: and yet when you are broken, they will accuse you of imprudence and defrauding your creditors; you must buy dear and sell cheap, and live by the loss, or else displease^s.

Direct. xi. 'Remember still that the pleasing of God is your business in the world, and that in pleasing him your souls may have safety, rest, and full content, though all the world should be displeased with you^t.' God is enough for you; and his approbation and favour are your portion and reward. How sweet and safe is the life of the sincere and upright ones, that study more to be good than to seem good? And think if God accept them that they have

^r Dicebat expedire, ut sese ex industria comicis exponeret. Nam si quidem ea dixerint quæ in nobis corrigenda sînt, emendabunt: sin alia, nihil ad nos. Ibid.

^s Dicenti Alcibiadi, non esse tolerabilem Xantippen adeo morosam: atqui, ait, ego ita hisce jampridem assuetus sum, ac si jugitur sonum trochlearum audiam.....et mihi post Xantippes usum, reliquorum mortalium facilis toleratio est. Laert. in Socr. lib. ii. sect. 37, 38. pp. 102, 103.

^t Hoc habeo fere refugii et præsidi in meis ærumnis: sermones cum Deo, cum amicis veris, et cum mutis magistris. Bucholtzer.

enough? O what a mercy is an upright heart! which renounceth the world, and all therein that stands in competition with his God; and taketh God for his God indeed, even for his Lord, his Judge, his portion, and his all? Who in temptation remembereth the eye of God, and in all his duty is provoked and ruled by the will and pleasure of his Judge? and regardeth the eye and thoughts of man, but as he would do the presence of a bird or beast, unless as piety, justice or charity, require him to have respect to man, in due subordination to God. Who when men applaud him as a person of excellent holiness and goodness is fearful and solicitous, lest the all-knowing God should think otherwise of him than his applauders; and under all the censures, reproaches, and slanders of man, (yea, though through temptation good men should thus use him,) can live in peace upon the approbation of his God alone; and can rejoice in his justification by his righteous Judge and gracious Redeemer, though the inconsiderable censures of men condemn him^u. Verily, I cannot apprehend how any other man but this can live a life of true and solid peace and joy. If God's approbation and favour quiet you not, nothing can rationally quiet you. If the pleasing of him do not satisfy you, though men, though good men, though all men should be displeased with you, I know not how or when you will be satisfied. Yea, if you be above the censures and displeasure of the profane, and not also of the godly, (when God will permit them, as Job's wife and friends, to be your trial,) it will not suffice to an even, contented, quiet life. And here consider,

1. If you seek first to please God and are satisfied therein, you have but one to please instead of multitudes^x. And a multitude of masters are hardlier pleased than one. 2. And it is one that putteth you upon nothing that is unreasonable, for quantity or quality. 3. And one that is perfectly wise and good, not liable to misunderstand your case and actions. 4. And one that is most holy, and is not pleased in iniquity or dishonesty. 5. And he is one that is impartial and most just, and is no respecter of persons. 6. And he is one that is a competent Judge, that hath fit-

^u Nemo aliorum sensu miser est, sed suo: et ideo non possunt cujusquam falso, judicio esse miseri, qui sunt vere sua conscientia beati. Salvian. de Gubern. l. i.

^x Philosophi libertas molesta est omnibus. P. Scelig. multo magis fidelis pastora.

ness and authority, and is acquainted with your hearts, and every circumstance and reason of your actions. 7. And he is one that perfectly agreeth with himself, and putteth you not upon contradictions or impossibilities. 8. And he is one that is constant and unchangeable; and is not pleased with one thing to-day, and another contrary to-morrow; nor with one person this year, of whom he will be weary the next. 9. And he is one that is merciful, and requireth you not to hurt yourselves to please him; nay, he is pleased with nothing of thine but that which tendeth to thy happiness, and displeased with nothing but that which hurts thyself or others; as a father that is displeased with his children, when they defile or hurt themselves. 10. He is gentle, though just in his censures of thee; judging truly, but not with unjust rigour, nor making your actions worse than they are. 11. He is one that is not subject to the passions of men, which blind their minds, and carry them to injustice. 12. He is one that will not be moved by tale-bearers, whisperers, or false-accusers, nor can be perverted by any misinformation.

Consider also the benefits of taking up with the pleasing of God. 1. The pleasing of him is your happiness itself: the matter of pure, and full, and constant comfort, which you may have continually at hand, and no man can take from you. Get this and you have the end of man; nothing can be added to it but the perfection of the same, which is heaven itself.

2. What abundance of disappointments, and vexations will you escape, which tear the very hearts of man-pleasers, and fill their lives with unprofitable sorrows?

3. It will guide and order your cares, and desires, and thoughts, and labours to their right and proper end; and prevent the perverting of them, and spending them in sin and vanity on the creature.

4. It will make your lives not only to be divine, but this divine life to be sweet and easy, while you set light by human censures which would create you prejudice and difficulties! When others glory in wit, and wealth, and strength, you would glory in this, that you know the Lord.

5. As God is above man, thy heart and life are highly ennobled by having so much respect to God, and rejecting inordinate respect to man. This is indeed to walk with God.

6. The sum of all graces is contained in this sincere desire to please thy God, and contentedness in this so far as

thou findest it attained. Here are faith, and humility, and love, and holy desire, and trust, and the fear of God concentrated. You “sanctify the Lord of hosts himself, and make him your fear, and dread, and sanctuary.”

7. If human approbation be good for you and worth your having, this is the best way to it, for God hath the disposal of it. “If a man’s ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.” Appeasing their wrath, or restraining them from intended evil, or doing us good by that which they intend for hurt.

‘See therefore that you live upon God’s approbation as that which you chiefly seek, and will suffice you.’ Which you may discover by these signs: 1. You will be most careful to understand the Scripture, to know what doth please and displease God. 2. You will be more careful in the doing of every duty, to fit it to the pleasing of God than man. 3. You will look to your hearts, and not only to your actions; to your ends, and thoughts, and the inward manner and degree. 4. You will look to secret duties as well as public, and to that which men see not, as well as unto that which they see. 5. You will reverence your consciences, and have much to do with them, and will not slight them: when they tell you of God’s displeasure, it will disquiet you; when they tell you of his approbation, it will comfort you. 6. Your pleasing men will be charitable for their good; and pious, in order to the pleasing of God; and not proud and ambitious for your honour with them, nor impious against the pleasing of God. 7. Whether men be pleased or displeased, or how they judge of you, or what they call you, will seem a small matter to you, as their own interest, in comparison of God’s judgment. You live not on them. You can bear their displeasure, censures, and reproaches, if God be but pleased. These will be your evidences’.

γ Non est idoneus philosophiæ discipulus, qui stultum pudorem non possit contemnere. Id. ibid. p. 728.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

